

NĀLANDĀ

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With Compliments of the Author :

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The Mine of Learning, honoured Nālandā

—*Tāranāth*.¹

Early References

Nālandā, the modern Bargaon (Skt. Vaṭa grāma, village of banyan trees),² figures fairly prominently in the early Jaina and Bauddha literature.³ From the Jain books we learn that Nālandā was a prosperous suburb (*bāhīriya*) of Rājagṛha and that Mahāvīra spent fourteen cāturmāsya (period of rest in the rainy season) there. Nālandā is at a distance of seven miles from Rājagṛha, and the Buddhist works treat of them as two different places, and often speak of the country between them—*antarā ca Rājagaham antarā ca Nālandam*. These works also state more than once that the Buddha and Mahāvīra both visited the place at the same time, and that a mango park by name Pāvārika was the usual spot of the Buddha's sojourn whenever he visited the place. And the *Mahā-parinibbānasūta*⁴ says that the Buddha, followed by a great number of disciples, turned his steps towards Nālandā on his last journey. Nāla-grāma, the place of the birth and death of one of Buddha's chief disciples, was doubtless identical with Nālandā;⁵ and the village where Maudgalyāyana, another celebrated disciple, was born, was also in the neighbourhood.⁶

1. *Geschichte*, p. 152.

2. Bosch suggests a possible derivation from the name of Maṇivātaka, one of the five villages presented to the Bālaputra monastery, *JTBG*, lxxv (1925), p. 569, n. 101.

3. The passages have been collected together by Dr. Hirananda Sastri, *roc. Fifth Or. Conf.* pp. 386-400.

4. I, 15-18.

5. *Sudassana Jātaka*, SBE, xi, p. 238.

6. Beal, *Life of Hiuen-Tsang*, p. 105. Also, Watters, ii, 171.

The Name

Of the name Nālandā and of the mango grove in it where the Buddha sojourned whenever he went there, Hiuen Tsang narrates the following legend :⁷ 'The tradition was that in a mango wood in the south of this (Nālandā) monastery was a tank the dragon of which was called Nālandā and that his name was given to the monastery. But the facts of the case were that Ju-lai as a P'usa had once been a king with his capital here, that as king he had been honoured by the epithet Nālandā or 'insatiable in giving' on account of his kindness and liberality, and that this epithet was given as its name to the monastery. The grounds of the establishment were originally a Mango Park bought by 500 merchants for ten *koṭi* of gold coins and presented by them to the Buddha.' Hiuen Tsang thus implied that the monastery of Nālandā rose later on the spot of the mango grove hallowed by the presence of the Buddha on so many occasions.

Hiuen Tsang thus rejects the derivation of the name of the monastery from that of the dragon or serpent inhabiting a tank in the grove, and prefers to associate it with the limitless charities of the Buddha in a former birth as king; Chavannes notes that this name *na-alam-dā*, 'giving without tiring,' or 'that which has not enough of giving', is due, according to certain Chinese authors, to the magnificent donations that the foundation received successively from five princes,⁸ of which more presently.

The biographer of Hiuen Tsang narrates all the legends mentioned so far, and adds some new details regarding the original owner of the site of the monastery which shows that we have here a legend which is growing by progressive exercises in euhemerism; the site is no longer a mango grove, but the garden of a śreṣṭhin by name Āmra, and the five hundred merchants who gave the money for purchasing the garden for the Buddha got their reward duly and became arhats. Here is the account of the pilgrim's biographer : "The Nālandā monastery is the same as the '*charity without intermission*' monastery. The tradition of the old people is this :—To the south of the convent, in the middle of an Āmra garden, is a pool. In this pool is a Nāga called Nālandā, and the convent built by the side of the pool is therefore called after his name. Again there is a saying that Tathāgata whilst a Bodhisattva was the king of a great country and built his capital in this place. He was deeply affected towards the orphans and destitute,

7. Watters ii, 164. Ju-lai is Tathāgata, i.e., Buddha; P'usa is Bodhisattva.

8. *Rel. Em.*, p. 84, n. 2.

and, ever moved by this principle, gave away all he had for their good. In memory of this goodness they named the place '*doing charitable acts without intermission.*'

"The place was originally the garden of the lord (*Śreṣṭhin*) Āmra (or, *Amiara*). Five hundred merchants bought it for ten lacs of gold pieces, and presented it to Buddha. Here Buddha preached the law for three months, and most of the merchants obtained the fruit of Arhatship, in consequence."

I-tsing adheres to the story of the serpent, and says: "This is the model of the *Che-li-Na-lan-t'ouo Mo-ho-P'i-ho-louo* (*Śrī Nālandā-mahā-vihāra*).⁹ Translated into Chinese this name signifies: 'the happy great residence of the holy serpent.' In the countries of the West,¹⁰ when they speak of a king or of some high functionary or of the buildings of a great temple, they always prefix the particle *che-li* (*Śrī*) of which the sense conveys the idea of happy and fortunate. *Na-lan-t'ouo* (*Nālandā*) is the name of a serpent; near about there, in fact, there was a serpent which had the name *na-kia-lan-t'ouo* (*Naga-Landa*). It is from that that this name is derived. *P'i-ho-louo* (*vihāra*) has the sense of residence; those who say 'temple' do not make an exact translation."¹¹

Origin

The actual date of the foundation of the *vihāra* is not easy to ascertain. Fa-hien's silence regarding it has been the basis of the oft-repeated inference that the *vihāra* came into existence only after the period of his travel in India. But this may very well be doubted, because both Hsuen Tsang and I-tsing assign, as will soon be evident, a much higher antiquity to it, and so does the much later and less dependable Tāranāth. Fa-hien's silence—if indeed Fa-hien is silent¹²—can be taken only to indicate that the place had not yet attained fame as the most celebrated centre of learning in India. For the numerous references to *Nālandā* in the Buddhist

9. The plan is missing.

10. West of China.

11. *Ib.* pp. 93-4.

12. Watters, ii, 165 indeed says like many others that Fa-hien does not even mention *Nālandā* by name. I find, however, that Giles' translation contains this at p. 49: '*Nālandā*, the village where Śāriputra was born and to which he returned to pass away. Here a pagoda was raised, which is still in existence.' Legge allows the possibility also. Bosch (p. 547 n. 61) holds that Fa-hien's *Nāla* is not the same as *Nālandā*, but a place at some

canonical books show that long before the visits of Hiuen Tsang and I-tsing to the great monastery several memorials must have come up to preserve the memory of the spots in the neighbourhood where the Buddha and his disciples had lived and taught, and that these 'gandhakotīs' must have been visited by numerous devotees in the course of their pilgrimages in the holy land. In fact the accounts of the two Chinese pilgrims who have most to tell us about Nālandā leave little room to doubt this; but it is more difficult to decide when Nālandā became a cloister and a college with several halls of learning, the chief centre of Buddhist scholasticism that we find it in the seventh century and later. The third or fourth century A.D. or even an earlier time may well be suggested as the period of the commencement of that growth on the intellectual and educational side which in course of time made it the richest and the greatest centre, not only of Buddhist lore, but generally of all learning in India,—in the entire world.

Archaeological evidence does give some support to our view of the antiquity of Nālandā. The exact structure of the main stupa, it has been shown, was remodelled no less than six times after its original foundation, and the fourth remodelling, 'the most interesting and the best preserved,' had corner towers of which three have been exposed; by their beautiful stucco figures of the Buddha and the Bodhisattvas on them, and by the inscriptions of Buddhist texts on bricks found in the core of votive stupas, we may infer that this remodelling took place some time in the sixth century A.D. "Considering the huge accumulations upon which the fifth stupa was built, it seems that the foundation of the original stupa must have been laid about two centuries earlier".^{12a} The date suggested is approximate; it may be earlier. And there is the possibility that even the core of the extant structure replaced some earlier form of which we have no knowledge.

Early History

Let us see what the pilgrims themselves have to say on the early history of the place. And first, Hiuen Tsang:¹³ "Here soon

distance from it, and accounts for Fa-hien's silence re Nālandā by supposing that like many other places it was deserted at the beginning of the fifth century when the strong wave of Hindu revival under the Guptas affected Buddhism adversely everywhere in Northern India. I am unable to share this view of the position of Buddhism in the fifth century.

12a. A. Ghosh, *A guide to Nālandā*, p. 3.

13. Watters ii, pp. 164-5.

after the decease of the Buddha, Śakrāditya, a former king of this country, esteeming the one vehicle and reverencing the Three Precious Ones, built a monastery. This king's son and successor Budhagupta, continuing his father's good work, to the south of the monastery built another one; to the east of this king Tathāgata-gupta built a third monastery; and to the north-east of this king Bālāditya added a fourth. At the formal opening of this last monastery Brethren from all quarters were present by invitation of the king, and among these strangers were two who said they were Chinese. When the king went to visit these latter, they had disappeared in a mysterious manner, and His Majesty was so affected by the incident that he abdicated and joined the Buddhist fraternity (in the monastery he had built). The rule of seniority placed him below all the Brethren, and he did not like this change in his social position. He put his case before the ordained brethren who thereupon made a rule that members of the establishment who were not fully ordained should rank according to age, a rule which is found in this monastery and in no other. To the west of the monastery Bālāditya's son and successor Vajra built another; and to the north of this a king of Mid-India afterwards erected a large monastery. Then round all there was built a lofty enclosing wall with one gate."

The *Life of Hiuen Tsang* also gives more or less the same details; its account of Bālāditya and the priests from China is much more intelligible than the unresolved mystery in the pilgrim's own account, for we read in the *Life*: 'Bālāditya built a Saṅghārāma to the north-east. Afterwards the king, seeing some priests who came from the country of China to receive his religious offerings, was filled with gladness, and he gave up his royal estate and became a recluse.'

I-tsing gives a much briefer account, but adds some fresh data regarding the beginnings of the foundation. He says: 'More than seven yojanas to the north-east of the temple of Great Intelligence (Mahābodhi) we come to the temple of Na-lan-t'oulo (Nālandā). It was formerly constructed by the king Che-li-Che-kie-louo-tie-ti (Śri Śakrāditya) for the pi-tch'ou (bhikṣu) Ho-louo-che-p'an-che (Rājavamśa) of Northern India. This temple, in its original area, was only a square of fifty feet; later, the kings that succeeded vied with one another in extending it more and more, so that to-day there is no temple more beautiful than this in all Jambu-dvīpa'.¹⁴

14. *Rel. Em.*, pp. 84-5.

Hiuen Tsang also ascribes the foundation to Śakrāditya, but does not say anything of Bhikṣu Rājavamśa or of the original size of the temple.

Critique

Can we identify the monarchs mentioned in Hiuen Tsang's account viz., Śakrāditya, his son and successor Buddha-gupta, Tathāgatagupta, Bālāditya, Vajra, the son and successor of Bālāditya, and lastly the king of Mid-India? It seems that we may well be sure of the identity of Bālāditya. He was doubtless the Gupta king Narasimha Gupta, the pupil of Vasubandhu and the enemy of Mihirakula. And so far as I know, Satishchandra Vidyabhushan was the first to treat the names preceding Bālāditya as those of three successive generations of his predecessors, and suggest A.D. 450 as the probable date of Śakrāditya's rule.¹⁵ This line of argument was taken up again in 1928 and developed in much greater detail by Father Heras in his memoir on *The Royal patrons of the University of Nālandā*,¹⁶ placing the foundation of Nālandā in the year A.D. 427 some years after Fa-hien's travels in India. These views have since been adopted by other writers though with minor variations that we need not stop to discuss.

Let us see what can be said in their favour. Though Vidyabhushan and Heras have not said so, I think they were influenced largely by the narrative of the early history of the monastery by the biographer of Hiuen Tsang; for though the pilgrim himself says nothing about the intervals or the relations between Buddha-gupta and Tathāgatagupta, and between Tathāgatagupta and Bālāditya, his biographer does make the first five kings in the list (Śakrāditya to Vajra) succeed in a regular line, the son succeeding to father in every case, and after mentioning the king of Mid-India as the sixth, he definitely says: 'Thus six kings in connected succession added to these structures.' I must hasten to add, however, that though Hwui Li's account has suggested the idea of continuous succession of the rulers, his account of the relationship among them has not been followed by Heras, who adheres to Hiuen Tsang's indications in this regard and finds that they tally with the facts of Gupta history. Thus his scheme of identifications is like this :

15. *Mediaeval Logic* (1909), App. A.

16. JBORS xiv, pp. 1-23. See also Kimura, *Shifting of the centre of Buddhism in India*.

<i>Hiuen Tsang</i>	<i>Gupta History</i>
Śakrāditya	Kumāragupta I
Buddha-gupta, son and successor	Skandagupta, son and successor of Kumāra.
Tathāgatagupta, successor	Puragupta, brother (not son) and successor of Skanda
Bālāditya, successor	Bālāditya, (son and) successor.

Other considerations urged in support of the scheme may be summed up thus : Śakra is the same as Mahendra, the Āditya title of Kumāragupta I. Again, the father of Bālāditya was Puragupta (Vikramāditya) who sent his son to Vasubandhu for his education and had therefore Buddhist leanings; clearly he could be referred to as Tathāgatagupta on that account. Further, the time of Kumāragupta, heir to the high intellectual tradition of the nine gems of Vikramāditya's court was eminently suited for the foundation of the University ; the Gupta empire was at its zenith, and Kumāragupta himself is known (from a reference to him in Vāmana's *Kāvya-lankāra*) to have been a patron of letters; how best could the title have been earned but by the foundation of Nālandā ? He was perhaps no Buddhist himself, but surely a respecter and promoter of the creed and its institutions.

By themselves these considerations appear plausible and they seem to contain the elements of an intelligible story of the development of Nālandā. But there are a number of considerations on the other side which seem to put the whole matter back in the region of doubt and uncertainty. Hiuen Tsang puts the reign of Śakrāditya 'soon after the decease of the Buddha'; his biographer is not so definite and says : 'After the Nirvāṇa of Buddha an old king of this country called Śakrāditya.....built this convent';¹⁷ but then he says elsewhere that Nālandā as a centre of learning had already existed for seven hundred years at the time he wrote (A.D. 688) ;¹⁸ and Beal has drawn pointed attention to this in a note saying that this implies two things : first that Śakrāditya must have lived about the first century B.C., and secondly that Hiuen Tsang's expression 'soon after the nirvāṇa' must be taken, *cum*

17. *Life*, p. 110.

18. *Ib.* p. 112 and n. 2. See also n. 1, p. xx.

grano, to mean 'a good while after.' We may not be right to take this as a definite indication of Śakrāditya's date without further evidence of a more tangible character; but we can surely infer that both Hiuen Tsang and his biographer thought that the Nālandā of which they were speaking was of much higher antiquity than the age of Kumāragupta I. Tāranātha likewise speaks of Nālandā as dating from before Aśoka's time, of Aśoka's constructions there, and of the activity of Rāhula, Nāgārjuna and Āryadeva; all this may not be, perhaps is not, history; but it attests sufficiently the prevalent belief in the antiquity of Nālandā.

It is difficult to accept the view that Śakra should be taken to stand for Mahendra when we are dealing with the distinguishing titles of monarchs. Again, Vasubandhu's relation to the Guptas has been much debated. Vāmana in his *Kāvyālaṅkāra* distinctly says that Vasubandhu was the Counsellor of a son of a Candragupta, and that it was on this account that he was called the refuge of the learned—*āśrayaḥ Kṛtadhiyām*.¹⁹ Vidyabhushan accepts this, as also Paramārtha's statements regarding the discipleship of Bālāditya and the death of Vasubandhu in his reign at the age of eighty, and makes Vasubandhu a contemporary of four Gupta rulers, Kumāra I, Skanda, Pura and Narasimha, assigning him a life period from about A.D. 410 to about A.D. 490. Heras puts a more general construction on the praise of Kumārā Gupta in order to strengthen his claims to be the founder of the University; but this ignores the specific gloss of Vāmana whose comment must be presumed to be based on the context of his citation or on some living tradition on the subject. But quite other views have been taken, and Vasubandhu has been held to have been the contemporary of Samudragupta in the fourth century A.D.²⁰ The explanation offered for Puragupta being called Tathāgatagupta by Hiuen Tsang is by no means convincing, and no reason can be found why Skanda Gupta should be called Buddhagupta. It may be noted at this point that another reconstruction is offered by H. C. Raychaudhuri who equates Buddhagupta with Budhagupta, makes him the youngest son of Kumāra I (Mahendra, Śakra), and postulates a new branch of the Guptas.²¹ I do not think he has answered Fleet's objections to the identification of Buddha with Budha by the analogies he has cited, and I do not think there is

19. III, 2.2.

20. Smith, EHI, 4, App. N. pp. 346-7.

21. *Pol. Hts. of Anc. India*, pp. 501 and 506.

any evidence worth the name for the genealogy he offers though with an interrogation mark and dotted lines indicating its tentative character; he also postulates a second Bālāditya different from Narasimha and identified doubtfully with Bhānu Gupta. Such are the strange results of trying to read Hiuen Tsang's names into the evidence of the inscriptions. One more point. If Hiuen Tsang applied the name Tathāgatagupta to Pura-gupta for the reason put forward by Heras, why did he then fail to say that Bālāditya was the son of Tathāgatagupta?

Conclusion on early history

I think that it is really no use trying to get more history out of Hiuen Tsang than there is in him; Bālāditya is a real name; of him the pilgrim himself gives many other details in relation to the Hun invasions, and what he says on this subject as also the part of Bālāditya in the growth of Nālandā is fully borne out by epigraphy. The rest seems to be no more than just edifying gossip. Names like Śakrāditya, Tathāgatagupta and Buddhagupta are obviously legendary. It is well known that the pious pilgrim was credulous about whatever concerned Buddhism.

Of the two remaining kings mentioned by Hiuen Tsang, Vajra is identified by Heras with Kumāragupta II, though he admits that the name Vajra is not easy to explain; and the king of Mid-India with Harṣavardhana,—this in spite of the facts that Hiuen Tsang mentions this king of Mid-India amongst past monarchs, and refers later to the constructions of Harṣa as those of Śilāditya still in progress while he was in India.

Our conclusion is that Bālāditya is the first truly historical name definitely known to be associated with the foundations in Nālandā; the identity of Vajra and the king of Mid-India who are mentioned after him is at present not clear. The earlier history is evidently a made up affair in which history has changed into legend as it does more often in India than elsewhere.²² But we have reason

22. It is perhaps worth while, in passing, to draw attention to some modern legends on Nālandā. In *A Note on the excavations of Nālandā and its History* (JBRAS, NS ii 1926), pp. 214-6, and in the article on *The Royal Patrons of Nālandā* referred to above, Heras notes that the buildings in Nālandā are found built over earlier structures, and accounts for this by postulating that Nālandā was demolished and rebuilt more than once—first destruction by Mihirakula and restoration by Bālāditya who held a great assembly in commemoration of it; second destruction by Śaśāṅka followed by a restoration by Harṣa; perhaps a third destruction also in the

to think that Nālandā was older than Fa-hien's time and that he knew of it, though somehow he does not give a detailed account. It may be that, as already suggested, the *vihāra* had not attained such great celebrity at the beginning of the fifth century as it did later. It is not improbable that the Guptas patronised it, and much of the expansion of the place might have been due to this patronage, and the Gupta names of the monarchs mentioned by Hiuen Tsang may be a recognition of this general fact, though even of this we may not be quite sure as the names might have been coined in the mint of legend on the analogy of names of kings most familiar to people in the age of the Guptas. In any event, the details of the early history of the growth of Nālandā before the time of Bālāditya are hidden from view.

Epigraphic evidence

The importance of Nālandā in the early Gupta period is borne out by epigraphy. One of the seals recovered during the excavations there bears the inscription *Kumārāmātyādhikaraṇa*²³ in Gupta characters of the fifth century. This need not necessarily mean that Nālandā was the provincial headquarters, but it indicates at the least that some communication was made to Nālandā from such headquarters. An even earlier record is a copper-plate of the time of Samudragupta;²⁴ its genuineness has indeed been called in question, but apparently on insufficient grounds; this record mentions the *gopasvāmi* and the *akṣapaṭalādhikṛta* of the Nālandā village, and also other offices like *mahāpikūpati* and *mahabalādhikṛta*.

Growth

To return to the accounts of Hiuen Tsang and I-tsing. While the former counts only six *vihāras*, I-tsing saw eight of them.

wars of Ādityasena Īśānavarman. There is no support for all this either in Hiuen Tsang, our most detailed source for the period, or in Archaeology. Nothing is commoner than repeated reconstructions of growing institutions, and many *stūpas* are known to have been rebuilt over and over again without their having been destroyed in war. The actual occasions of destruction for which we have definite evidence will be noted in the course of this paper.

23. Bhandarkar's *List* No. 2103.

24. *Ib.* No. 2075; *EI*, xxv, pp. 50-3. A coin, archer-type of Kumāragupta (A.D. 413-55), and a clay mould of Gupta coins have also been discovered. —Ghosh, *op. cit.*, p. 10.

Hsüen Tsang records his impressions of the sculpture in the monasteries and temples and gives some details of particular vihāras. He says: "In this establishment, the work of a succession of sovereigns, the sculpture was perfect and really beautiful. In the monastery built by Śākṛāditya, there is now an image of Buddha, and every day forty brethren are sent to take their food there to requite the bounty of the founder." Watters²⁵ comments on this as follows: 'It is probable that the Śākṛāditya monastery was in ruins when Yuan-chwang visited the place, and that the forty brethren were sent from another vihāra to eat their breakfast at it, to keep the memory of its establishment and its founder. At I-ching's time there were only the foundations of this monastery visible.' He cites no authority for these statements, and I have not come across any.

Sacred Vestiges

That Nālandā stood on most hallowed ground is emphasised by Hsüen Tsang's account of the sacred vestiges round about the great vihāra and his record of the details of some of the miracles connected with them :

"All round the Nālandā establishment were 100 sacred vestiges of which two or three are to be briefly noticed. To the west was a temple at a place where the Buddha had lodged for three months and preached to devas and men, and above 100 paces to the south of this was a tope where a foreign bhikṣu had visited Buddha. This bhikṣu on meeting Buddha prostrated himself and prayed for rebirth as a universal sovereign; Buddha hereupon remarked with sorrow that as this man's merit was vast, and his faith firm, he would have attained Buddhahood if he had so desired. Now he would have to become a sovereign once for every atom of dust from the place of his prostration down to the 'gold wheel.' As he was given up to worldly joy the sacred fruit would be thus remote (that is, he would attain arhatship only after all these countless rebirths). To the south of this tope was a standing image of Kuan-tzū-tsai P'usa,²⁶ sometimes seen with a censer in the hand performing pradakṣiṇa to Buddha's temple. To the south of this was a tope which contained the shaven hairs and nail-clippings of the Buddha for three months; and devotees who performed pradakṣiṇa to this tope were often cured of their ailments. Near

25. ii p. 167.

26. Avalokiteśvara.

the tank outside the west wall was a tope where a Tirthika holding a small bird in his hand²⁷ asked Buddha about life and death. South-east from this and above 50 paces within the wall was a remarkable bifurcated tree, according to the A and C texts 80 or 90 (but according to B and D eight or nine) feet high. This tree, the height of which never varied, had grown from a tooth-stick thrown on the ground by the Buddha.²⁸ To the east of the Tooth-stick tree was a large temple above 200 feet high where the Buddha had preached. To the north of this above 100 paces was a temple with an image of Kuan-tzū-tsai P'usa which believing worshippers saw in various forms and at different positions."²⁹

Later Additions

Of the temple of Bālāditya and later additions by Harṣa and his contemporaries we naturally get more specific details in Hiuen Tsang's account:

"To the north of this was a large temple above 300 feet high built by king Bālāditya. In its size and ornamentation and in its image of Buddha this temple resembled the one at the Bodhi Tree.

"To the north-east of Bālāditya's temple was a tope where Buddha had preached and to the north-west was a sitting place of the Four Past Buddhas; to the south was a bronze (t'u-shi) temple in course of construction by king Śilāditya. To the east of this above 200 paces and outside the wall of the establishment was king Pūrṇavarman's copper image of the Buddha more than 80 feet high in a six storeyed building. Two or three *li* north from this was a brick temple with a large image of Tārā P'usa, a popular object of worship. Within the south gate of the wall³⁰ was a large well which had been miraculously produced in the Buddha's lifetime."³¹

It will be noticed that Harṣa's bronze temple was not yet completed during Hiuen Tsang's stay in India. Pūrṇavarman is said elsewhere by the pilgrim to have been the last descendant of Aśoka and to have resuscitated the Bodhi tree after its destruction by the cruel and tyrannical Śaśāṅka of Gauda.³²

27. Also mentioned by I-tsing, p. 163 *post*.

28. Also mentioned by I-tsing, *Record* p. 35, *Rel. Em.* p. 95.

29. Watters ii, p. 170.

30. Of the Tārā temple, Spooner A.R.E.C., 1916-17, p. 45.

31. Watters: *Yuan Chwang*, ii, p. 171.

32. Watters ii, p. 115.

General Description : Hwui-Li

This account of the Master of the Law is brilliantly supplemented by the general description of the vihāra given by his pupil Hwui-Li in the biography of the Master :

"Moreover, the whole establishment is surrounded by a brick wall, which encloses the entire convent from without. One gate opens into the great college, from which are separated eight other halls, standing in the middle (of the Saṅghārāma). The richly adorned towers, and the fairy-like turrets, like pointed hill-tops, are congregated together. The observatories seem to be lost in the mists (of the morning), and the upper rooms tower above the clouds.³³

"From the windows one may see how the winds and the clouds produce new forms, and above the soaring eaves the conjunctions of the sun and moon may be observed.

"And then we may add how the deep, translucent ponds, bear on their surface the blue lotus, intermingled with the Kie-ni (Kānaka) flower, of deep red colour, and at intervals the Āmra groves spread over all, their shade.

"All the outside courts, in which are the priests' chambers, are of four stages. The stages have dragon-projections and coloured eaves, the pearl-red pillars, carved and ornamented, the richly adorned balustrades, and the roofs covered with tiles that reflect the light in a thousand shades, these things add to the beauty of the scenes".³⁴

I-tsing

I-tsing, who lived in Nālandā for a decade, gives a detailed account of the buildings of the monastery, their alignment and orientation, the technique of their construction and the size of the rooms occupied by the monks and the arrangements in them. He stresses the absence of privacy in these rooms, and the general impression produced by his vivid description tallies completely with that created by the earlier and more prosaic account of Hiuen Tsang, and the more lyrical descriptions of his biographer and of the composer of the Yaśovarman inscription to be cited presently :

"The configuration of this monastery is nearly that of a square, like the earth. On all the four sides, the straight and projecting

33. Cf. the description in Yaśovarman's inscription, *infra*.

34. *Life*, pp. 111-2.

edge of the roof forms long covered galleries which go all round the edifice. All the buildings are in brick; they comprise three stories, each story being more than 10 feet high. The transverse beams are joined by plates and there are neither rafters nor tiles, but with bricks they have made an esplanade; all the temples³⁵ are perfectly aligned and we can go and come at our ease. The wall of the last edifice constitutes the outer wall. The tiers of bricks rise to a height of thirty or forty feet. At the top there are representations of human heads of natural size.

"As to the residences of the monks, there are nine of them on each front; each habitation has a surface of about twenty square feet. At the farther end they have opened a window which rises up to the edge of the roof. Though the doors are high, they have made them with a single leaf in a manner that all can be seen from a distance; it is not allowed to put in any blinds there. Casting a cursory glance from outside, one sees all the four sides at a time; a mutual surveillance is thus exercised; how would it be possible to do the least thing secretly? At the top of one of the angles, they have made a suspended way which allows of going and coming over the temple. At each of the four angles there is a hall constructed of bricks; learned and venerable monks live there.

"The gate of the temple is turned towards the west; its top floor soars into the sky and makes one giddy in the open. There are marvellous sculptured images the beauty of which touches the limit in the art of ornamentation. This gate is connected to the main building which has no distinct beginning; but two steps before it they have erected four columns. Though this gate is not of a great height, the wood work they have put in there is extremely strong.

"Every time the hour for a meal comes they raise the fastening bars at all the doors. It is in fact the aim of the holy religion to preclude hidden things."

Flooring

"In the interior of the monastery, wide spaces of more than 30 paces are paved in brick. For the smaller spaces of five to ten feet, for all the spaces which cover the rooms, those which are on the roof, before the verandah or in the habitations, they have used fragments of big bricks of the size of peaches or jujubes; they

35. We shall see, a few lines later, that in the monastery of Nālandā there were no fewer than eight temples—Chavannes.

mix them together with a sticky paste and they strike on them with beaters so as to make them level. They enclose the circumference with lime. They make a mixture of the fibres of hemp to which they add oil with the remnants of hemp and the debris of old hides; they moisten it for many days after they spread this plaster on the floor filled with bricks; they cover it all with green herbs. After about three days they see if it has become dry. They rub the surface many times with polishing stones; they sprinkle it with a shower of red earth or a substance like cinnabār. Then, with a greasy plaster, they make it polished and clear like a mirror. All the halls and the steps of the staircases are finished in this manner. When these operations have come to an end, the passers-by can tread on this surface with their feet and traverse it for ten or twenty years without its ever deteriorating or cracking. This is not like lime which when it is moistened by water does not fail to scale off.

Plan of Temples

"There are no fewer than eight temples so constructed. Up above, all have a level terrace and we can walk there. Their dimensions are more or less similar. To the eastern side of each temple, they have chosen a building, sometimes simple, sometimes triple, for placing the holy images therein. Or else, at a variable distance to the front on the same side, they have erected an observatory in the form of a terrace which serves as the hall of Buddha.

"On the western side of the temple, outside the great enclosure, they have built here and there large stūpas³⁶ (tsoei-tou-po) and a large number of caityas (tche-ti). Their number is (about) a hundred. The sacred vestiges are close to one another and defy enumeration. Gold and precious stones form a brilliant ornamentation; in truth, there are few places so perfect."³⁷

Not satisfied with his verbal description, I-tsing prepared a plan of the monastery calculated to enable the reader to follow his account more easily. The plan is unfortunately lost, but here is his introduction to it where he explains its purpose, and his wistful longing for a similar institution in China :

36. According to this passage the difference between the stūpa and the caitya appears to be above all in the size of the two sorts of edifices, the first being more raised than the second. (See however n. 7, p. 39—"They call caitya the places consecrated by the great events of the life of Buddha. They count eight of them.")—Chavannes.

37. *Rel. Em.* pp. 85-7.

"Although I describe again the form of the temple I still fear that there is some confusion in the thing; I have therefore drawn up this design, which represents its plan, hoping thus that the eyes will catch it without difficulty. If we could propose to the Emperor the construction of a temple conforming to this model, the perfection of the Royal Residence (Kusāgārapura) and that of China would be alike.

"Sighing for this, I said: 'a crowd of good works are as formerly harmoniously disposed; all the eminent men are already old for us; one sees thus that living persons are separated from the dead; how should the heart not be afflicted by this?'³⁸

I-tsing's observations which accompanied the missing plan are worth reproducing on account of the precise details they furnish regarding the relative position of the various buildings. A stūpa of Bālāditya is located, and more details of ornamentation and sculpture are furnished.

"When one has seen one of the temples, the seven others are identical. On the top they offer a level terrace on which people can walk.

"In examining the configuration of the monastery, it is necessary to look at it from the Western façade;³⁹ it is while going to the West, outside the entrance, that one well apprehends the true form of it.

"About twenty steps to the south of the door, on the edge of the road, there is a *tsoel-tou-po* (stūpa) more than a hundred feet high. It is there that formerly the Honoured of the World (loka-jyeṣṭha) passed in retreat the three months of summer.⁴⁰ The Sanskrit name of this edifice is *Mou-louo-kien-t'ouo-keu-ti* (Mūla-gandha-koṭi), which signifies in Chinese: the hall perfumed by the first source.⁴¹

"More than fifty steps to the north of the door-way there is another great stūpa higher still than the first. It is the king *Yeou-je* (Bālāditya) who raised it. Both are alike built of bricks. The ornamentation with which they are covered is of remarkable delicateness; there are found beds of gold and floors of precious stones.

38. *Ib.* p. 93.

39. As corrected in the light of *Ki-ye* at BEFEO iv, p. 80.

40. The retreat of summer (*varṣa*) lasted in India from the middle of June up to the middle of October—Chavannes. *Varṣa*, however, is 'rainy season.'

41. They called *Koṭi* or *Gandhakoti* all the places where the Buddha had stayed for a time.—Chavannes.

The offerings are of a rare beauty. At the centre there is an image of *Jou-lai* (Tathāgata) turning the wheel of the law. Further on, to the south-west, there is a small *tche-ti* (caitya) about ten feet high; it is there that a *P'ouo-louo-men* (Brahman) who held a small bird in his hand posed some questions;⁴² what they call in Chinese the pagoda of the oriole, is this same edifice.

"To the west of the 'hall of the first origin' (*mūla-gandha-koṭi*), there is a tree of the species that the *Fo* (Buddha) prescribed for the teeth.⁴³ It is not a willow.

"Still more to the west, on the edge of the road, is found an altar of Prohibitions.⁴⁴ It is more than ten feet, large measure, each side. It consists of a brick wall more than two feet high that they have raised on a plane area; in the interior of the enclosure is a raised seat, about five inches higher than the surrounding (area); at the centre is a small *tche-ti* (caitya). From the east of the altar to the angle of the hall, there is the emplacement of a covered walk of the Buddha; it is made of rows of bricks; it is about two cubits broad, about fourteen or fifteen long and more than two cubits high. On the promenade they have fashioned with lime which they have left white, representations of the lotus flower; they are about two cubits high and more than one foot broad; there are fourteen or fifteen of them; they mark the traces of the feet of Buddha."⁴⁵

Evidence of Seals

The village of Bargaon and its monuments and mounds were first noticed in modern times by Buchanan-Hamilton who visited the place in the first quarter of the nineteenth century. Cunning-

42. Hiuen Tsang also speaks of the stūpa where a heretic with a sparrow in his hand questioned the Buddha on the subject of death and of life.—Chavannes. See p. 158 *ante*.

43. Cf. Hiuen Tsang, p. 158, *ante*.

44. It is there that the novitiates were admitted to receive ten prohibitions and entered the order definitely. Cf. Edkins: *Chinese Buddhism*, p. 35.—Chavannes.

45. *Rel. Em.* pp. 94-6. In the *Nan-hai*. I-tsing speaks of the walks of the Buddha. There were these walks in all places that the Faithful often visited, as at the base of the *Gṛdhrakūṭa* and at the foot of the *Bodhidruma*, in the *Mṛgadāva* and in *Rājagṛhapura*. All these walks had the same dimensions. But, according to the text of the *Nan-hai*....., the flowers of lotus that mark the traces of the feet of the Buddha are only two inches and not more than two cubits high. There must therefore be a fault in one of the two texts. The reading 'two inches' seems to me preferable.—Chavannes.

ham was the first to identify these ruins with the ancient Nālandā, basing himself on the travel account of Hiuen Tsang, and the inscriptions on some of the images he collected there. His account of the site in his first report is still very instructive study. Some years later Broadley carried out some amateur diggings and published a monograph based on them in 1872, without earning the thanks of his successors in the field.

Excavations of a systematic nature carried on since 1915 have yielded, as noted already, a number of very interesting minor antiquities besides giving striking proof of the accuracy of the literary accounts of Nālandā which we get from the Chinese writers. The most interesting among these minor antiquities are the inscribed clay seals, one of the earliest among which has been noticed already. There are at least three seals of different dates, all belonging to the Maukharis of Kanauj; and other unpublished seals of the same line of kings are said to be preserved in the Nālandā Museum.⁴⁶ The three published seals belong to Hari-varman (475-500 A.D.), Īśānavarman (550-76) and Śarvavarman (576-79).⁴⁷ We may be fairly certain that the great University was in continuous receipt of Maukhari patronage, and one wonders if the king of Mid-India named by Hiuen Tsang after Vajra as the builder of one of the temples in Nālandā was after all a Maukhari. One other seal⁴⁸ proves the connection with Nālandā of the great Harṣavardhana whose patronage of Buddhism in general and of Nālandā in particular is amply attested in the pages of Hiuen Tsang; and yet another seal⁴⁹ shows that the contemporary and friend of Harṣa, Bhāskaravarman of Assam, was also among the patrons of the great vihāra.

Yaśovarman

We must also take note of the stone inscription of another Maukhari ruler Yaśovarmadeva (729-43 A.D.) who was known only by literary references till the discovery of this stone inscriptions.⁵⁰ The object of the inscription is to record the gifts to

46. Pires, *Maukharis*, p. 61 n. 2 and p. 92 n. 3.

47. Bhandarkar, *List Nos.* 2079-81.

48. *Ib.* No. 2086.

49. *Ib.* No. 1667.

50. Bhandarkar, *List No.* 1742 as also 2105 and *n.* Also Pires, *The Maukharis* pp. 144-5. I offer a fresh translation of the verses on Nālandā; Dr. Hirananda Sastri's translation is influenced by his untenable theories regarding Yaśovarman. The inscription, is definitely a record of Yaśovarman's time, and Bālāditya comes in most incidentally.

the vihāra from Mālāda, the son of a minister of Yaśovarman and guardian of his northern frontier; the gifts were made in part to the Buddha image in the temple of Bālāditya and in part to the monks of the Saṅgha. The general description of the vihāra of Nālandā, and the particular account of Bālāditya's temple contained in this inscription are worth citing here for comparison with the Chinese accounts reproduced above:

"Nālandā with her scholars famed for their learning in the sacred texts and the arts, and with the clusters of rays (issuing) from her caityas shining brightly like white clouds,—(Nālandā) seems to laugh at all the cities of monarchs, who had gained fame (wealth) by ripping the temples⁵¹ of (enemy) elephants on hotly contested battle fields (4). The row of her vihāras with the series of their finials touching the clouds appears like a pretty festoon made for the Earth by the Creator and shining in the aerial region; her palatial temples brilliant with the network of rays (issuing) from their numerous jewels bear the splendour of Sumeru—the pleasant abode of groups of good Vidyādharas (of the Saṅgha which upholds right learning)⁵² (5). Here was erected by the great king Bālāditya of irresistible valour, after he conquered all his enemies and brought the whole earth under his sway, a large and beautiful white temple (prāsāda) to Bhagavān Buddha, to indulge, I think, his desire to see the Kailāsa excelled (in splendour) (6). Moreover, spurning the lustre of the moon, surpassing the beauty of the rows of Himalayan peaks, casting into the shade the white Gaṅgā of the heavens, and silencing other disputing streams⁵³ (also streams of disputants), (this prāsādā), I believe, has discovered after wandering all over the earth that there are no more conquests to be made, and has come to think that any further wandering would be in vain, and then, come to stay here like a lofty column of great fame. (7)"

This *praśasti* was composed by two monks of Nālandā itself by command of the Saṅgha; the authors, Śīlacandra and Svāmi-datta, were conscious of the inadequacy of their powers for the great task to which they had been called, and their touching apology, echoing Kālidāsa, reads:

*'Vāñchetāṁ kiṁ na paṅgū śikhari-taruphalāvāptimuccaiḥ
kareṇa |*

51. I have not translated a cumbrous attribute to the elephants' temples.

52. The pun on *Sadvidyādharasaṅgha* is almost untranslatable.

53. There is a subtle and untranslatable play on the words *mūkayan vādi-sindhūn*, and *bhivana iha vrthā bhrāntirityākālayya*.

Pālas

From the middle of the eighth century almost to the day of its ruin and destruction by Muslim invaders, Nālandā enjoyed the sustained patronage of the mighty Pāla kings,⁵⁴ and excavation has brought to light much unmistakable evidence of this. An illegible copper-plate⁵⁵ which, judging from the seal soldered to its top and bearing the legend *Dharmapāladevaḥ* in one line below a dharma-cakra, must have contained a record of Dharmapāladeva, the second ruler of the Pāla dynasty, constitutes the earliest bit of evidence in this series. Of the reign of Devapāladeva in the ninth century, we have two records from Nālandā itself, besides the evidence of the Ghosrāwan inscription on the flourishing state of Buddhism at the time.⁵⁶

Abbot Viradeva

The Ghosrāwā inscription is not dated; but mentions Devapāladeva as the patron of Viradeva who was elected to the presidency of the vihāra of Nālandā to succeed Satyabodhi whose close friend and right hand man Viradeva had been for some time before his election to the succession. The inscription reads :

*Bhikṣor-ātmasamaḥ suhr̥d-bhuja iva
Śrī-Satyabodher-niḥo |
Nālandā-paripālānāya niyataḥ
saṅghasthiter-yas-sthitaḥ ||*

Viradeva came from Nagarahāra in the Jelalabad valley and had studied scripture under Sarvajñāsānti of the Kaṇṣka vihāra in Peshawar before he went to Bihār and gained the esteem of Devapāla and the monks of Nālandā.

One of the two Nālandā records of Devapāla's time is a short inscription in the pedestal of a metal image, the gift of the king.⁵⁷

54. The Gurjara-Pratihāras also patronised it if Page is right in ascribing some votive inscriptions of Nālandā to the time of Mahipāla of Kanauj c. A.D. 850. 'The coins found at Nālandā include those of Kumāragupta I and Narasimhagupta of the Gupta lineage, Śaśānka of Bengal (c. 600-620), Ādivarāhe or Bhoja I of the Pratihāra dynasty (c. 835-85), and of Govindacandra of the Gāhadvāla dynasty (c. 1114-55). All of these are now deposited in the Indian Museum'—A. Ghosh, *op. cit.* p. 38.

55. ASI, 1924-5, p. 86. Bhandarkar, *List* No. 2082.

56. Kielhorn, IA, xvii, pp. 309-11.

57. Bhandarkar, *List*, 2083.

The other⁵⁸ is a celebrated document recorded on one of the largest copper plates known, if not the largest, measuring 2' x 2½' inscribed on both sides, the first bearing 42 lines and the other 24 lines in pre-Nāgari script and in the Sanskrit language; the formula of gift, lines 21-43, is in prose and the rest in verse. The seal soldered to the top of the plate bears the inscription: 'Śrī Devapāladevasya.' The record is dated in the thirty-ninth year of Devapāla, c. A.D. 860. That Devapāla was himself a Buddhist, not merely a patron of Buddhism, is clear from his being styled in this record and in the Monghyr plate of his thirty-third year as follows:

'Paramasaṅgataḥ Parameśvaraḥ Paramabhaṭṭārako Mahārājādhirājah śrīmān Devapāladevaḥ.'

Bālaputra's vihāra

The chief interest of the Nālandā plate of Devapāla lies in the fact that it records the construction, at Nālandā, of a fresh *vihāra* by Bālaputra deva, the Śailendra ruler of Suvarṇadvīpa (Sumatra), and the gift, with Devapāla's permission, of five villages to this new *Vihāra* for the purposes detailed in the following terms:

"to serve as the source of income for the temple of the worshipful Lord Buddha and of the Initiates in the entire Dharma beginning with Prajñāpāramitā; for the bali- and caru-offerings, the accommodation, clothing, alms, beds, seats, the needs of the sick like medicines, etc., of the Saṅgha of honourable monks of the four quarters, being a group of Tāntrika-Bodhisatvas in whom the eight Mahāpuruṣas are reincarnate; for the copying, etc., of the Dharma-ratna and for the repair of the building of the vihāra when it becomes dilapidated."⁵⁹

Organisation

The new monastery then is a self-contained unit, with its own arrangements for worship, study and good living, and with its own separate budget. It is possible that these features mark it off as a foreign monastery, maintained by a foreign power for the benefit of its own nationals who came to study in Nālandā. It was, so to say, the 'Suvarṇadvīpa Hall' of the University. But there is nothing to preclude the supposition that the whole place was organised from the beginning in such distinct units, each with its own distinct features; in fact some support may be found for this idea,

58. *Ib.*, 1613.

59. I have followed Bosch's interpretation of these rather involved phrases.

in the progressive increase in the number of 'temples' that we are able to trace, though not in all its stages, in the course of generations. And Bālaputra might only have followed a procedure for which there were several precedents when he made the arrangements actually detailed in the charter of his vihāra. The constitution of Nālandā then seems to have been very like that of a large modern university organised in residential colleges clustering together within a small area and maintaining constant touch with one another.

National vihāras

In establishing on a permanent footing a *vihāra* at Nālandā for the convenience of his subjects visiting that great centre of learning and religion in a distant land, Bālaputra might have been influenced by what he heard of similar institutions maintained by others elsewhere in India, and he was also setting a precedent to be followed by one of his successors more than a century later in South India. There was in existence at Nāgārjunikoṇḍa in the very early centuries of the Christian era a *sīhala-vihāra*, a monastery for Ceylonese monks who were actively engaged in spreading the light of true knowledge all over India; but this vihāra was an endowment of the members of the Ikṣvāku family ruling in the locality, and not a creation of the Kings of Ceylon for the benefit of their countrymen visiting Nāgārjunikoṇḍa. A closer analogy is furnished by Meghavarna's vihāra in Buddha Gayā which was erected by the Ceylonese king with the permission of Samudragupta to meet the felt needs of visitors from Ceylon to the holy land, and was still flourishing as a magnificent establishment when Hiuen Tsang visited it in the seventh century.⁶⁰ I-tsing mentions several other examples. He records that a king of the South Indian kingdom of Kuluka, possibly Kolkai, i.e., Pāṇḍyan kingdom according to Chavannes, had built a vihāra for the use of his subjects at a distance of two yojanas to the north-east of the Mahābodhi temple at Bodh Gayā. There were separate monasteries also for the people of Tukhāra and Kāpiśa from the North. There was again a Chinese cloister at Mṛgaśikhāvana at a distance of forty yojanas to the east of Nālandā; this establishment had been founded by Śrī Gupta and granted twenty-four villages for its maintenance; but when I-tsing came to India it had fallen into decay, so that he complained that while all other nations had facilities for their sojourn in the holy land, the Chinese alone lacked it in his

60. Smith, EHI⁴, pp. 303-4.

time. It has been suggested with great plausibility (by Bosch) that these foundations maintained by different kingdoms at a considerable expense had other purposes to serve besides serving the religious interests of pilgrims; merchants and ambassadors might have found good use for them also and they might have had a share in furthering profitable trade relations and friendly, political and secular intercourse among the different countries involved.⁶¹

Bālaputra's example in turn, was followed in the eleventh century by Cūḍāmaṇi Varman and his son Māravijayottuṅgavarman who built and endowed a splendid vihāra for the monks of the Śailendra kingdom at Negapatam, then the first port of call for all pilgrims to South India by the sea-route from China and Śrī Vijaya; and we hear again of this famous establishment at the close of the century in the inscriptions of the reign of Kulottuṅga I. Like the Bālaputra vihāra at Nālandā, it may be noted in passing, the site of the Cūḍāmaṇi-vihāra at Negapatam has yielded a sumptuous collection of Buddhist bronzes of varying sizes which are still awaiting publication.

Nālandā Art

The Bālaputra monastery and its bronzes raise the question of the relation of Nālandā art to Hindu-Javanese art. Writing in 1925, and struck by the remarkable likeness to Javanese technique exhibited by some of the Nālandā finds, particularly a bronze Akṣobhya (ASI, 1917-18, Pl. XIVa) from the Bālaputra vihāra as it turned out after the discovery of the Devapāla plate in 1921, Bosch⁶² formulated one of two possibilities for accounting for the resemblances noticed. Either Nālandā art and Hindu-Javanese art were branches of an originally common Buddhist art that flourished long before Java or Śrī Vijaya entered history, or the Nālandā bronzes were the direct productions of Javanese artists made by some of them settled in Nālandā or imported from Java in a finished form. He also pointed out that an image of a six-armed Yamāntaka from another monastery may well be considered the true prototype of the later Krodha forms so well known in Tibetan Buddhist art.⁶³

61. *Rel. Em.* pp. 80-4; Bosch, *op. cit.*, pp. 560-2.

62. *Op. cit.*, pp. 585-8.

63. *Ib.*, p. 581.

The Nālandā bronzes have been studied in some greater detail more recently in a monograph by Bernet-Kempers. The long and continuous intercourse between the region of Nālandā and the archipelago is attested by the appearance in Sumatra in the late seventh century of the Vajrayāna type of Buddhism of the Yogācāra school of Nālandā, and of pre-Nāgari script a little later in Java, the evolution of the script being quite up-to-date as compared with its development in India. A verse from the *Veṅṇī-samhāra* of Bhaṭṭa-Nārāyaṇa, a Bengali writer of the eighth century, reappears in the old Javanese Ādiparva. And we have in Kumāraghoṣa of the Kelurak inscription an instance of a Buddhist priest from Gauḍa who went and settled in Java. But apparently more people came to India from Sumatra and Java as the rise of the Bālaputra vihāra shows. This vihāra was exposed early in the excavations, in 1915, and over two hundred metal objects including many fine statues and statuettes were recovered from it. Bronze finds, on the other hand, are rare in the other monasteries of Nālandā. It is believed that this large find is the result of an accident in which the monastery perished by fire and its inmates had no time to remove the bronzes. However this may be, the fact of a part of Nālandā having perished by fire early in the eleventh century, and of having been renovated thereafter is recorded in an inscription of the eleventh year of Mahipāla I⁶⁴ attesting the gift of a door-joint by a certain Bālāditya of Kosāmbi during the *agni-dagdhoddhāra*. Some of these bronzes are inscribed in Devapāla's reign and are thus definitely products of Pāla art. They are all of the same school and must be taken to represent the gradual assemblage of pious gifts extending over some time, but not long. They resemble Javanese bronzes of the period rather closely, and the question of Javanese influence on them has been much discussed; but so high an authority as Krom has declared that he would have selected only a minority of them as products of Hindu-Javanese art if their find spot had been kept away from him.

The conclusion of Bernet-Kempers on this question seems to be just: 'The art of Nālandā, developed under the influence of Java, also produced deities which were unknown or not popular in Java. From Nālandā these and similar images were brought over to Burma, Nepal, Ceylon, etc., and also to Java, as is apparent from the bronzes from that country which show Pāla features.'⁶⁵ He also suggests that the Jambhala figure and a type of

64. Bhandarkar, *List*, No. 1626.

65. p. 71.

Buddha in Vajrāsana might have been taken over by Java from Nālandā art. But Javanese bronze-casting reached its high-water mark before the end of the eighth century, while the Nālandā group falls mostly in the ninth century. Let us remember also that these are not the earliest bronzes in India of their type, and that Pāla art, again, was not the only source of Indian influences playing on Javanese culture.

Another phase of Nālandā art which has not yet been studied in detail is illustrated by numerous stucco figures discovered in 1925-26 and doubtless forming part of a relatively early period in the life of the monastery. These form part of an original corner tower that was found to be completely encased in the solid brick work of a later structure. The stucco figures modelled on a foundation of clay are set in rows of separate niches in several tiers; they mostly represent the Buddha in different conventional attitudes, and their simple and effective style suggests a really early date for them. Mr. Page who brought them to light puts them in the 7th or 8th century; they may well be earlier.⁶⁶ In the year 1933-34 was recovered a magnificent image of the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara in a perfect state of preservation from a small chamber on the side of a caitya (No. 12), and this figure has been hailed 'as one of the finest sculptures left to us as a precious heirloom by the master sculptors of the Gupta period.'⁶⁷ It may be noted also in passing that several monasteries with monks' cells intact have been exposed by the excavations carried out over a number of years; these confirm very closely the accuracy of I-tsing's description of the vihāra, and 'some of the cells show clearly the shape of well-built true arches; the existence of these in Bihar about the middle of the ninth century is of great interest for the history of Indian architecture.'⁶⁸

Later History

We lack the means of tracing the fortunes of Nālandā in any detail during the eleventh and twelfth centuries. A Nāgari stone inscription discovered in two fragments in 1928-30 from the latest stratum of a Monastery numbered VII in the Archaeological reports is of some interest in this connection. It is not dated, but

66. ABIA, 1928, pp. 19-20. See p. 150 *ante*.

67. ABIA, 1934, p. 5.

68. *Ib.* p. 4.

doubtless belongs to the first half of the twelfth century A.D. as stated by N. G. Majumdar.⁶⁹

Vipulaśrī's Mitra Vihāra

The inscription details the Vidyāvamśa of a certain ascetic Vipulaśrīmitra and gives an account of his sacred foundations. It does not mention Nālandā by name, but seems to record the erection of a new monastery there by him, for the benefit of the Mitras, the line of ascetics to which he himself belonged. The provenance of the inscription together with the definite statement 'this vihāra made by him and given to the Mitras shines here as an ornament of the world excelling Indra's palace in beauty' must be accepted as sufficiently satisfactory evidence of what happened.

Library

The following passage from Satischandra Vidyabhusan on the University and Library of Nālandā will doubtless be read with great interest:⁷⁰ "According to Tibetan accounts the quarter in which the Nālandā University, with its grand library, was located, was called Dharmagañja (Piety Mart). It consisted of three grand buildings called Ratnasāgara, Ratnodadhi, and Ratnarañjaka, respectively. In Ratnodadhi, which was nine-storeyed, there were the sacred scripts called Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra, and Tāntrik works such as Samājaguhya, etc."

Destruction

When the wave of Muslim inroads swept over Bihār at the end of the twelfth century, Nālandā suffered a cruel destruction like much else; Islam, as a historic force, has been the most uncompromising enemy of Buddhism and Buddhist institutions from the heart of Central Asia to the Islands of the Southern Sea. The occurrences in Bihār are best described in the words of the leading Muslim historian of the times:⁷¹

"Muḥammad-i-Bakht-yār used to carry his depredations into those parts and that country until he organized an attack upon the fortified city of Bihār. Trustworthy persons have related on this wise, that he advanced to the gateway of the fortress of Bihār with two hundred horsemen in defensive armour, and suddenly at-

69. *El.*, xxi, p. 97.

70. *Indian Logic*, p. 516.

71. *Tabakat-i-Nasiri*, I, pp. 551-2.

tacked the place. There were two brothers of Farghānah, men of learning, one Nizām-ud-Din, the other Ṣamṣām-ud-Dīn (by name) in the service of Muḥammad-i-Bakht-yār; and the author of this book met with Ṣamṣām-ud-Dīn at Lakhanāwaṭī in the year 641 H., and this account is from him. These two wise brothers were soldiers among that band of holy warriors when they reached the gateway of the fortress and began the attack, at which time Muḥammad-i-Bakht-yār, by the force of his intrepidity, threw himself into the postern of the gateway of the place, and they captured the fortress, and acquired great booty. The greater number of the inhabitants of that place were Brahmans, and the whole of those Brahmans had their heads shaven; and they were all slain. There were a great number of books there; and, when all these books came under the observation of the Musalmāns, they summoned a number of Hindūs that they might give them information respecting the import of those books; but the whole of the Hindūs had been killed. On becoming acquainted [with the contents of those books], it was found that the whole of that fortress and city was a college, and in the Hindūi tongue, they call a college [*madrāsa*] Bihār."

A Tibetan Tradition

But this apparently was not quite the end, for the Tibetan authorities have a tradition of their own which Vidyābhūṣhaṇ recounts as follows:⁷² "After the Turuṣka raiders had made incursions in Nālandā, the temples and caityas there were repaired by a sage named Mudita Bhadra. Soon after this, Kukutasiddha, minister of the king of Magadha, created a temple at Nālandā, and, while a religious sermon was being delivered there, two very indigent Tīrthika mendicants appeared. Some naughty young novice-monks in disdain threw washing water on them. This made them very angry. After propitiating the sun for twelve years, they performed a *yajña*, fire-sacrifice, and threw living embers and ashes from the sacrificial pit into the Buddhist temples, etc. This produced a great conflagration which consumed Ratnodadhi. It is, however, said that many of the Buddhist scriptures were saved by water which leaked through the sacred volumes of Prajñā-pāramitā-sūtra and Tantra."

How Nālandā Rose

Such then was Nālandā for over a thousand years of its splendid history. Before proceeding to a study of the details of its organi-

72. *Indian Logic*, p. 516.

sation and institutions, of the names and fame of its teachers and the number and eminence of the visitors who came to it, we may well ask ourselves: what were the causes of the great popularity and eminence of Nālandā?⁷³ True the patronage of monarchs, the grant of protection, lands, immunities and what not by them to organised societies of monks, alone enabled them to fulfil the high calling to which they had dedicated themselves, and to kindle the light of the true knowledge of Dharma and spread it all over the world and thereby dispel the darkness of false knowledge and ignorance and even avert sickness, drought, war and other adversities. Nevertheless the question arises why Nālandā in particular, which had no great advantage by way of sacred associations with any striking incident in the life of the Buddha, and in this respect could hardly compete with Bodh Gayā, Sārnāth or Śrāvastī for instance attained a fame which cast all the other Saṅghārāmas of India into the shade. To such a question we are perhaps not in a position to furnish a completely satisfactory answer. But surely the happy geographical situation of Nālandā had something to do with it, and I-tsing is at some pains to bring home to his readers the great advantages of this situation. He writes :

"This temple faces in the south the royal town (Kuśāgārapura) from which it is only 30 li distant; 'the peak of the vulture' (Gr̥dhrakūṭa) and the 'garden of bambus' (Vēṇuvana) are both by the side of the town. To the south-west, we go to the 'temple of the Great Intelligence' (Mahābodhi), to the due south towards the mountain of the Foot of the Venerable (Gurupāda), these two spots being both about seven relays (yojanas). To the north, we go towards Vaiśālī which is at a distance of about twenty-five relays (yojanas). To the west, we look towards the Mṛgadāva which is more than twenty relays (yojanas); to the east, for going to the state of *Tan-mouo-li-ti* (Tāmralipti), there are sixty to seventy relays (yojanas). That is the sea-port whence we embark for returning to China."^{73a}

These observations show that pilgrims taking the sea-route from China and Malayasia found it convenient to go to Nālandā from Tāmralipti, and plan the rest of their tour from there, a course which I-tsing himself adopted. And if they came by land, after all the perils and anxieties of their hard journey, the atmosphere

73. Cf. Bosch: *Een Oorionde*, TBG, lxx, pp. 530-2.

73a. *Rel. Em.* p. 97.

of quiet and study that prevailed in Nālandā invited them to stay there as long as they could before starting on the return journey. At Nālandā many pilgrims met, and it is no wonder that there grew up a lively trade in the two classes of goods, relics and manuscripts,⁷⁴ the acquisition of which was the chief inducement to the pilgrims to face the trouble and toil of their long journeys to the holy land and back. I-tsing alone carried away at the end of his ten years' stay in Nālandā about four hundred texts, sūtras, treatises on Vinaya, and śāstras, in Sanskrit, comprising together 500,000 ślokas, besides a faithful copy of the image at the Bodhimaṇḍa and three hundred relics.⁷⁵ Nālandā again had become from of old a centre of all types of higher study, not merely of Buddhism. In the old days Takṣaśilā had been the most celebrated of such centres as we can judge from the repeated references to it in the Jātaka stories and in early Sanskrit literature. But the frontier was exposed to many inroads by foreigners, and in the general disturbance of the period between the fall of the Mauryan empire and the establishment of Kuṣān power, Takṣaśilā might have been subjected to all the vicissitudes to which many other Saṅghārāmas in that quarter had to submit. It was seldom that these disturbances reached as far as Magadha, and the distance from the disturbed frontier which gave a relative immunity from trouble to Nālandā must have favoured it quite as much as its proximity to Tāmralipti, the port of landing for the pilgrims who came by sea from the East. Nālandā was a centre not only of Buddhism in its different aspects and of Buddhist studies, but of Brahmanical practices and scholasticism as well. The mention of *baḷi* and *caru*, quite Vedic names for offerings,⁷⁶ among the purposes for which the Bālaputra vihāra was endowed deserves to be noticed particularly in this connection, and we shall see that Hiuen Tsang himself studied Brahmanical scripture at Nālandā.

Studies of Hiuen Tsang at Nālandā

The following account of Hwui Li of the course of studies pursued by Hiuen Tsang during the fifteen months of his stay at Nālandā amply proves the wide scope and universal character of the educational courses pursued at that great centre:⁷⁷

74. Mss. known to have been copied in Nālandā are still found in all the more important collections of Mss. in all countries.

75. *Rel. Em.*, p. 193.

76. Cf. Bosch, p. 543 n 52a.

77. *Life*, p. 121.

"The Master of the Law whilst he stopped in the convent, heard the explanation of the Yoga-Śāstra, three times; the Nyāya-Anusāra-śāstra, once; the *Hin-hiang-tui fa-ming*, once; the Hetu-vidyā-śāstra and the Śabdavidyā and the *tsah liang* śāstras, twice; the Prāṇyamūla śāstra-ṭikā, and the Śata-śāstra, thrice. The Kośa, Vibhāṣa, and the Śaṭpadābhidharma śāstras, he had already heard explained in the different parts of Kaśmir; but when he came to this convent he wished to study them again to satisfy some doubts he had: this done, he also devoted himself to the study of the Brāhmaṇ books and the work called Vyākaraṇa on Indian letters, whose origin is from the most remote date, and whose author is unknown."

It should perhaps be stated that the Nyāya-Anusāra-śāstra was a Hinayānist work of the Sarvāstivādins,⁷⁸ and the Prāṇyamūla śāstra-ṭikā, one of the leading works of the Mādhyamika school of Mahāyāna. The Śatasūtra (Śāstra) was a work of Āryadeva, translated by Hiuen Tsang later.

General

In another context the biographer of Hiuen Tsang gives a glowing account of the greatness of Nālandā as a centre of higher study, the comprehensive range of its intellectual pursuits, and the varied attainments of its teachers:

"The Saṅghārāmas of India are counted by myriads, but this is the most remarkable for grandeur and height. The priests, belonging to the convent, or strangers (*residing therein*) always reach to the number of 10,000, who all study the Great Vehicle, and also (*the works belonging to*) the eighteen sects,⁷⁹ and not only so, but even ordinary works, such as the Vedas and other books, the Hetuvidyā, Śabdavidyā, the Cikitsāvidyā, the works on Magic (Atharvaveda), the Sāṅkhyā; besides these they thoroughly investigate the '*miscellaneous*' works.

Teachers

"There are 1000 men who can explain twenty collections of Sūtras and Śāstras; 500 who can explain thirty collections, and perhaps ten men, including the Master of the Law, who can explain fifty collections. Śīlabhadra alone has studied and understood

78. Nanjio, No. 1265.

79. i.e. of the Hinayāna.

the whole number. His eminent virtue and advanced age have caused him to be regarded as the chief member of the community. Within the Temple they arrange every day about 100 pulpits for preaching, and the students attend these discourses without any fail, even for a minute (*an inch shadow on the dial*).⁸⁰

Huen Tsang himself has recorded what he saw of the academic life of the place together with the names of its prominent teachers and the causes of their celebrity in the following terms:

"In the establishment were some thousands of Brethren, all men of great ability and learning, several hundreds being highly esteemed and famous; the Brethren were very strict in observing the precepts and regulations of their order; they were looked up to as models by all India; learning and discussing they found the day too short; day and night they admonished each other, juniors and seniors mutually helping to perfection. If among them were any who did not talk of the mysteries of the Tripiṭaka such persons, being ashamed, lived aloof. Hence foreign students came to the establishment to put an end to their doubts and then became celebrated, and those who stole the name (of Nālandā Brother)⁸¹ were all treated with respect wherever they went. Of those from abroad, who wished to enter the schools of discussion the majority, beaten by the difficulties of the problems, withdrew;⁸² and those who were deeply versed in old and modern learning were admitted, only two or three out of ten succeeding.

"Among the celebrated men of Nālandā who had kept up the lustre of the establishment and continued its guiding work, there were Dharmapāla⁸³ and Candrapāla who gave a fragrance to Buddha's teachings, Guṇamati and Sthiramati⁸⁴ of excellent reputation among contemporaries, Prabhāmitra of clear argument, and Jinamitra of elevated conversation, Jñānacandra of model character and perspicacious intellect, and Śīlabhadra⁸⁵ whose perfect excel-

80. *Life*, p. 112.

81. Bogus degrees then were not unknown even in those remote times!

82. Watters doubts the 'gate-keeper's part' in this; he thinks it was only a process of 'obtaining entrance' or 'admission to the schools of debate.' (168). But at Vikramaśīlā, the gate-keepers' places were held by distinguished pandits. Vidyābhūṣaṇ, *Ind. Logic*, p. 520.

83. d. c. A.D. 600. A native of Kāñcī, he taught at Nālandā for thirty years and went to Suvarṇadvīpa towards the end of his life—BEFEO xxx, p. 56 n. 3.

84. Both earlier than Dharmapāla.

85. Abbot of the monastery during H. T.'s visit.

lence was buried in obscurity. All these were men of merit and learning, and authors of several treatises widely known and highly valued by contemporaries.”⁸⁶

Studies described by I-tsing

I-tsing states that the number of fully ordained monks in his day was 3500; together with the novitiates, the number exceeded 5000.⁸⁷ His account of the course of education is of more general interest, but was also meant to describe what prevailed in Nālandā. It will be seen that it conforms very closely to the indications furnished in the less systematic account of Hiuen Tsang. After sketching the elementary study of the Siddham in the beginning, followed by Sūtra, Dhātu and Khila, all relating to grammar, I-tsing's account proceeds to describe the study of the *Kāśikā-vṛtti* and what followed:

“This *Vṛtti-sūtra*⁸⁸ is a work of the learned Jayāditya. He was a man of great ability; his literary power was very striking. He understood things which he had heard once, not requiring to be taught twice. He revered the Three Honourable Ones (*i.e.*, Triratna), and constantly performed the meritorious actions. It is now nearly thirty years since his death (A.D. 661-662). After having studied this commentary, students begin to learn composition in prose and verse, and devote themselves to logic (*Hetuvidyā*) and metaphysic (*Abhidharmakośa*). In learning the *Nyāyadvāratāraka-śāstra*, they rightly draw inferences (*Anumāna*); and by studying the *Jātakamālā* their powers of comprehension increase. Thus instructed by their teachers and instructing others they pass two or three years, generally in the Nālandā monastery in Central India, or in the country of Vālabhi (Wala) in Western India. These two places are like Chin-ma, Shih-ch'u, Lungmen, and Ch'ue-li⁸⁹ in China, and there eminent and accomplished men assemble in crowds, discuss possible and impossible doctrines, and after having been assured of the excellence of their opinions by wise men, become far-famed for their wisdom. To try the sharpness of their wit (*lit.* 'sharp point of the sword'), they proceed to the king's court to lay down before it the sharp weapon (of their abilities); there they present their schemes and show their (*political*) talent, seeking to be appointed in the practical government.

86. Watters: *Yüan Chwang*, Vol. II, pp. 164-5.

87. *Rel. Em.*, p. 97 and n. 1.

88. *Kāśikā-vṛtti*.

89. Seats of learning in China.

When they are present in the House of Debate, they *in a grave demeanour, sit in the āsanās*⁹⁰ and seek to prove their wonderful cleverness.

"When they are refuting heretic doctrines all their opponents become tongue-tied and acknowledge themselves undone. Then the sound of their fame makes the five mountains (of India) vibrate, and their renown flows, as it were, over the four borders. They receive grants of land, and are advanced to high rank. They give dissertations upon the great system.⁹¹ After this they can follow whatever occupation they like".⁹²

Disputation

It will not escape the attention of the reader what a large part oral disputation played in the educational programme of those days. Scholars of established reputation all the world over, and young aspirants to academic knowledge and fame flocked to Nālandā to take part in, or at least be witnesses to, the open disputations in which theses on points of controversy were stated, defended and attacked, reputations made or lost. It was indeed a proud day in a scholar's life when he won his spurs in controversy, together with a title and other insignia of academic distinction, which gained him a sure place in public esteem as I-tsing states, and as we may surmise, opened out to the lay pupils the road to material prosperity in some secular office in the service of the State.

The economic basis of this good life of the spirit was well secured by the pious devotion of the rulers of the land. The endowments recorded in the stone inscriptions of Yaśovarman and the copperplate of Devapāla's reign are only typical of a large class of benefactions, the cumulative result of which is very clearly indicated to us by the invaluable accounts of the Chinese pilgrims. And the inmates of these richly endowed institutions merited the support they got not only by their scholarship, but by the modesty and

90. The italicised translation is that of Jayaswal, JASB vii (1911) p. 312 for '*raise their seat*' of Takakusu.

91. Jayaswal, JASB vii (1911) p. 312, referring also to digvijaya of Paṇḍitas. Takakusu has here: *their famous names are, as a reward, written in white on their lofty gates.*

92. Record, pp. 176-178.

well-regulated discipline of their personal conduct. Thus says Hwui Li :⁹³

"The priests dwelling here, are, as a body, naturally (or spontaneously) dignified and grave, so that during the 700 years since the foundation of the establishment, there has been no single case of guilty rebellion against the rules.

"The king of the country respects and honours the priests, and has remitted the revenues of about 100 villages for the endowment of the convent. Two hundred householders in these villages, day by day, contribute several hundred piculs of ordinary rice, and several hundred catties in weight of butter and milk.^{93a} Hence the students here, being so abundantly supplied, do not require to ask for the four requisities. This is the source of the perfection of their studies, to which they have arrived."

I-tsing puts the number of villages set apart for the support of the monastery as 200 in one place and 201 in another. In the *Record* he says :

"The rites of the monastery of Nālandā are still more strict. Consequently the number of the residents is great and exceeds 3,000. The lands in its possession contain more than 200 villages. They have been bestowed (upon the monastery) by kings of many generations. Thus the prosperity of the religion continues ever, owing to nothing but (the fact that) the Vinaya (is being strictly carried out)." ⁹⁴

And elsewhere:⁹⁵ 'There are 201 villages which are under them; the sovereigns have, from generation to generation, given them these men and these lands for their perpetual upkeep'.

Financial Administration

Some account is given by I-tsing of the economic administration of the vihāra and its properties; we do not get much on the income side with which the monk perhaps did not concern himself; but on the method of regulating expenditure, and the sanctions behind it we get something of importance and interest:

"Those who have charge of guarding the granaries and supervision of the lands, though they be two or three, must also send a servant for the administration of the granaries. This (servant)

93. *Life*, pp. 112-3.

93a. 1 picul=133½ lbs. 1 catty=160 lbs.—Beal.

94. *Record* p. 65.

95. *Rel. Em.* p. 97.

joins hands and makes his declaration; if every body is agreed, then it may be done. For the expenses, in truth the defect that some one may arbitrarily dispose of it does not exist. If any one does not make public declaration and employs something arbitrarily, *be it only* a twentieth of a bushel of grain, he is forthwith expelled by his colleagues. If a person considers himself so powerful, that he uses as he pleases the goods of the community, that he decides important affairs on his own private authority and without *declaring* to the assembly, they call him *Kiu-louo-po-ti* (*Kulapati*),⁹⁶ which signifies 'chief of the family'; that is a grave defect in the eyes of the Law of Buddha; that is what men and gods hate altogether; however useful to the monastery this same person might be later on, a very great fault has been definitely committed by him. Those who are wise certainly do not act thus."⁹⁷

Hospitality

The material life of the monastery stood at a fairly high level of comfort, and may be said to compare by no means unfavourably with similar institutions maintained in our own day by the Jesuits all the world over. The biographer of Hiuen Tsang gives a magnificent account of the reception accorded to the Master of the Law, and the supplies that were granted to him during the period of his stay in the *vihāra*. This account is interspersed with the story of Hiuen Tsang's meeting with Śīlabhadra, of a former dream of Śīlabhadra that had prepared him well in advance for the arrival of the Chinese monk, and of his acceptance of the foreigner as his disciple. I reproduce Hwui Li's account of all this without any change in his sequence:

Reception to Hiuen Tsang

"On the tenth day he went to the Nālandā temple; the congregation there had selected four of their number, of distinguished position, to go and meet him; journeying in their company about seven yojanas he reached the farm-house belonging to the temple. It was in (*the village, where*) this house (*stands*), that the honourable Maudgalyāyana was born. Halting here for short refreshment, then, with two hundred priests and some thousand lay patrons, who

96. We see that the term *Kulapati* when it is applied to a monk is far from being an honorific as was thought at one time (Burnouf—*Introd. à l'hist. du Bouddhisme Indien*, p. 216, n. 2).—Chavannes.

97. *Rel. Em.* p. 90.

surrounded him as he went, recounting his praises, and carrying standards, umbrellas, flowers and perfumes, he entered Nālandā.

"Having arrived there he was joined by the whole body of the community, who exchanged friendly greetings with the Master, and then placing a special seat by the side of the Sthavira (*presiding priest*), they requested the Master to be seated. The others then also sat down.

Supplies ordered

"After this the Karmadāna was directed to sound the Ghaṇṭā and proclaim: 'Whilst the Master of the Law dwells in the convent, all the commodities used by the priests and all the appliances of religion are for his convenience, in common with the rest.'

Escorted to Śīlabhadra

"Then selecting twenty men of middle age, skilful in explaining the religious books and of dignified carriage, they deputed them to conduct the Master to the presence of *Ching-fa-tsong* (treasure of the good law). This is the same as Śīlabhadra.

"The congregation, from the excessive respect they have to him, do not venture to call him by his name, but give him the appellation of *Ching-fa-tsong*.

Hsien Tsang meets Śīlabhadra

"Whereupon, following the rest, he entered to salute this eminent person. Having seen him, then the chief almoner presented him (i.e. Śīlabhadra) with all things necessary without stint, paying his respects according to the proper ceremonial, approaching him on his knees and kissing his foot, and bowing his head to the ground. The usual greetings and compliments being finished *Fa-tsong* ordered seats to be brought and spread out, and desired the Master of the Law and the rest to be seated. When seated he asked the Master of the Law from what part he came; in reply he said: 'I am come from the country of China, desiring to learn from your instruction the principles of the Yoga-Śāstra.'

Story of the dream

"Hearing this, he called for his disciple Buddhābhaddra, whilst tears filled his eyes; now Buddhābhaddra was the nephew of *Fa-tsong*, and upwards of seventy years of age, thoroughly versed in the Sūtras and Śāstras, and excellent in discourse. *Fa-tsong*

addressing him said : ' You may recount for the sake of the company present, the history of my sickness and sufferings three years ago.'

"Buddhabhadra having heard the request sobbed aloud and wept—but then restraining his tears he declared the past history and said : ' My Master (Upādhyāya) some time ago was painfully afflicted with colic. On each occasion when the attack came on, his hands and feet were cramped with pain, and he would suddenly cry out with agony as if he had been burned with fire, or pierced with a knife; the attack would subside as suddenly as it came on; and this went on for twenty years and more. But three years ago the severity of his suffering was so hard to bear, that he loathed his very life and desired to starve himself to death. In the middle of the night he had a dream in which he saw three Devas (*heavenly men*), one of the colour of gold, another of the colour of bright crystal, another as white as silver, their appearance and form commanding, of dignified presence, and clad in light shining garments; approaching the Master they asked him, saying; 'Are you anxious to get free from this body of yours? The Scriptures speak, saying, the body is born to suffering; they do not say we should hate and cast away the body. You in one of your past births were the king of a certain country, and you caused much suffering among living creatures, and now you have this suffering as your recompense. Search out therefore and examine your past faults, and repent of them sincerely; take your affliction quietly and patiently; labour diligently in explaining the Sūtras and Śāstras; you will thus get rid of your pain yourself; but if you loathe your body, there will be no cessation to your sufferings'.

"The Master having heard these words, paid his adorations with the utmost sincerity.

"Then the golden-coloured one, pointing to the one that shone like crystal, said to the Master: 'Dost thou know or not that this one is Avalokiteśvara Bodhisattva?' and then pointing to the silver-coloured one he added: 'and this is Maitreya Bodhisattva'.

"The Master immediately paid worship to Maitreya and asked him, saying: 'Your servant Śīlabhadra has ever prayed that he may be born in your exalted palace courts, but he knows not whether he will gain his wish or not.' In reply, he said, 'You must widely disseminate the true law, and then you shall be born there.'

"The golden-coloured one said: 'And I am Mañjuśrī Bôdhisattva. Seeing that you desired to get rid of your life, contrary to

your true interest, we are come to exhort you to the contrary; you should rely on our words, and exhibit abroad the true law, the *Yoga śāstra* and the rest, for the benefit of those who have not yet heard it. Your body will thus by degrees become easy and you will suffer no further pain. Do not overlook that there is a priest of the country of China who delights in examining the great Law and is desirous to study with you: you ought to instruct him carefully.'

"*Fa-tsong* having heard these words worshipped and answered: 'I shall obey, according to your honourable instructions.' Having said this, they disappeared.

"From that time the sufferings of the Master from his disease came to an end.

"The company present hearing this history were all filled with wonder at the miraculous event.

Its Effect on Hiuen Tsang

"The Master of the Law having heard for himself this narrative was unable to control his feelings of sympathy and joy. He again paid his respects and said: 'If it be so, as you say, then Hiuen Tsang ought with his utmost strength to listen to and practise (*your religious advice*). Would that your reverence, of his great compassion, would receive me for the purpose of instruction.'

Accepted as disciple

"Then *Fa-tsong* asked him further, 'For how many years have you been on your journey?' He answered, 'During three years;' and so, as the particulars of his directions, received in his dream, were completely fulfilled, he caused the Master of the Law to rejoice in their relationship as Master and disciple.

His Residence

"After these words he retired and went to the college of Bālāditya-rāja and took up his residence in the dwelling of Buddhahadra, having four storeys (or, *the fourth storey*), who entertained for seven days. After this he went to reside in a dwelling to the north of the abode of Dharmapāla Bodhisattva, where he was provided with every sort of charitable offering. Each day he received 120 Jambiras, 20 *Pin-long-tseu* (pūga, *areca nut*), 20 *tau-k'au* (nutmegs), an ounce (*tael*) of Camphor, and a *ching* (peck) of Mahāsāli rice. This rice is as large as the black bean, and when

cooked is aromatic and shining, like no other rice at all. It grows only in Magadha, and nowhere else. It is offered only to the king or to religious persons of great distinction, and hence the name kung-ta-jin-mai (i.e., *rice offered to the great householder*).

"Every month he was presented with three measures of oil, and daily a supply of butter and other things according to his need.

"A pure brother (*a Upāsaka*) and a Brahman, relieved from all religious duties, accompanied him with a riding elephant."⁹⁸

Guests

The biographer winds up this interesting account of the hospitality enjoyed by Hiuen Tsang during his stay at Nālandā with a general remark which implies that the honours done to the Master of the Law formed more or less the norm which prevailed in the great vihāra for the reception and entertainment of guests.

"In the Nālandā convent the abbot entertains a myriad priests after this fashion, for besides the Master of the Law there were men from every quarter; and where in all their wanderings have they met with such courteous treatment as this?"⁹⁹ Well might a modern commentator ask: "Who would not be the guest of the abbot of the Nālandā monastery with its six wings, each built by a king, all enclosed in the privacy of solid brick?"¹⁰⁰

Daily Routine

Of the general administrative arrangement in the monastery and the details of daily life and discipline observed by its inmates, we get some very interesting and concrete details in the observations recorded by I-tsing. The officers of the vihāra and their duties are explained in the following passage, which is unfortunately not as full as we should like:

Officials

"All those who have charge of the bolts of the doors take each night the seals with which they seal them and return them to the president; they should not on any account deposit them in the houses of the masters of the temple (*vihārasvāmin*) or the directors

98. *Life*, pp. 105-10.

99. *Life*, p. 110.

100. Cranmer Byng in *Life*, p. ix.

(*karmadāna*). Only those who constitute the monastery are called masters of the temple; their Sanskrit name is *pi-ho-louo-souo-mi* (*vihārasvāmin*). As to those who, in their turn, enforce the rules, guard the doors of the temple, and go to announce the affairs to the assembly of the monks, they are called *pi-ho-louo-po-luo* (*vihārapāla*); the translation of this word is 'guardian of the temple.' As to those who sound the *kienti* (*ghaṇṭā*) and supervise the repasts, their name is *kic-mouo-t'ouo-na* (*karmadāna*); the translation of this word is 'those who assign occupations;' those whom they call *wei-na* speak only in parables."¹⁰¹

Seal

The mention by I-tsing of seals with which the bolts of doors were sealed at night, reminds one of the many sealings of Nālandā vihāra recovered in the excavations and bearing the inscription: '*Śrī Nālandā-mahāvihārīyāryabhikṣu-saṅghasya*' below a wheel flanked by two gazelles, recumbent with head upraised and turned to the wheel.¹⁰² It has remained a puzzle why the wheel and gazelles symbol which represents Sārnāth, the Deer-park where the Buddha first 'turned the wheel of Law' i.e. delivered the first sermon, should make its appearance on a Nālandā seal. The suggestion may be offered that the saṅgha of Nālandā had different seals which were employed for different purposes, and that different sacred symbols were engraved on them to distinguish them from one another, while the inscription which was common to them all identified the seals as those of the particular vihāra. This is only a surmise, to be confirmed or contradicted by the progress of further exploration.¹⁰³ We have to remember that the same symbol is figured in the Pāla royal seal also.

101. *Rel. Em.* pp. 88-9.

102. ASR, EC. 1916-17, p. 43. Also ASR 1916-17, p. 21.

103. Hirananda Sastri's explanation that the idea was to suggest a relation between the Buddha preaching at Sāranāth and the hundreds of bhikṣus preaching at Nālandā is, I think rightly, characterised as far-fetched by Bosch, who also points out that the Buddha images in Nālandā are more often in the Bhūmisparśa mudrā which suggests Bodh-Gayā, rather than Sārnāth (p. 582, n. 128).

Bloch has noticed, however, a large image of Buddha (4ft high) preaching the first sermon attended on the sides by Bodhisattvas Maitreyaṇātha and Vasumitra and above by the flying figures of Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana.

JRAS 1909, pp. 441-2.

Ordination

Regarding the rules of ordination and discipline at Nālandā, I-tsing says that they conformed generally to what he has described in two other works of his, and adds that the superior of the *vihāra* was appointed solely on considerations of age, irrespective of merit :

"The rules concerning the monks and the novitiates of this temple, the statutes on the subject of the renunciation of the world and admission into the order, all conform to what is expounded in the *Tchong-fang-lou* and the *Ki-koei-tchoan*.¹⁰⁴ In the interior of the monastery they are content to take the oldest to give him the presidentship and to make him the venerable superior (*sthavira*); they do not trouble themselves about his merit."¹⁰⁵

We may also notice in this connection, one detail relating to ordination which I-tsing notes as a special feature of Nālandā in his *Record*, one of the works alluded to by him above:

"But in the Nālandā monastery the priests often receive the Upasampadā ordination (i.e. full ordination) in the early morning, on the *first day* of the 'long season' (17th of the 6th moon, see above) when the day has just begun to dawn. They mean to claim seniority among those who are ordained in the same manner."¹⁰⁶

Seniority

The order of seniority so established among the monks was no empty form, but it governed the order in the annual allotment of residential rooms, and was possibly also otherwise important.

104. I have not been able to find particulars on the *Tchong-fang-lou* of which the name signifies "written on the country of the middle," that is to say on India. As for *Ki-koei-tchoan* it is the abridged title of the *Nan-hai-ki-koei-nei-fa-tchoan* which signifies "Treatise on the inner law (i.e. Buddhism) sent from the seas of the south." This work was composed by I-tsing at the same time as the essay we translate, when he was in the country of Śrī Vijaya; he sent it by the monk *Ta-tsin* (§ 56) who returned from the southern seas to Canton and he sent it thus to China; the treatise on the inner law . . . expounds many points of discipline of the school of Sarvāstivāda; it comprises four chapters divided into forty sections; sections xxxii and xxxiv have been translated into French by M. Ryauon Fujishima (JA 1888).—Chavannes (1894). The whole work is now available as 'A Record of Buddhist Religion' in Takakusu's translation, Oxford, 1896.

105. *Rel. Em.* p. 88.

106. *Record*, p. 103.

This is what I-tsing says on the allotment of accommodation every year :

"Before the Varṣa (Rainy-season) rooms are assigned to each member; to the elders (i.e. Sthavira) better rooms are given, and thus gradually to the lowest. In the monastery of Nālandā such rules are practised at present; the great assembly of priests assigns rooms every year. This is what the World-honoured taught us himself, and it is very beneficial. Firstly, it removes one's selfish intention; secondly, the rooms for priests are *properly* protected."¹⁰⁷

Meetings

The occasions for summoning general meetings of the monks, the manner of summoning them, and the procedure followed at such meetings where evidently votes were not taken but the greatest measure of general agreement was aimed at, are detailed by I-tsing thus :

"When the community of monks has a business they convene a meeting for regulating it; the guardians of the temple (vihāra-pāla) have orders to go over the lines (of residences) for announcing it before each person successively; all should join the palms of the hands and each one express his sentiment. If only one person refuses his consent the business cannot be concluded. They do not have by any means the custom of striking a hammer before a meeting for ascertaining the opinion by a show of hands. If they see that some one refuses his consent, they persuade him by argument; they should not use intimidation or violence in order that under the constraint which is inflicted on him he might submit."¹⁰⁸

Autonomy in Discipline

I-tsing also makes it clear that the inmates of the monastery were autonomous in the mutual enforcement of their own rules of discipline, and not subject to any interference from the State :

"The spirit of the rules of this temple is very severe and very high. Every fortnight, those who regulate the occupations (karmadāna ?) and the assistant scribes have orders to go round the habitations reading the rules.

"The names of the members of the community are not inscribed in the royal registers. Those who violate the laws are

107. *Record*, p. 86.

108. *Rel. Em.* pp. 89-90.

punished for their faults by the assembly itself. In this manner the monks and the novitiates are all afraid of one another.¹⁰⁹

Worship

The forms and modes of worship observed in this large establishment may be gathered from the following description of I-tsing :

“In the Nālandā monastery the number of priests is immense, and exceeds three thousand; it is difficult to assemble so many together in one place. There are eight halls and three hundred apartments in this monastery. The worship can only take place separately, as most convenient to each member. Thus, it is customary to send out, every day, one precentor to go round from place to place chanting hymns, being preceded by monastic lay servants and children carrying with them incense and flowers. He goes from one hall to another, and in each he chants the service, every time three or five ślokas in a high tone, and the sound is heard all round. At twilight he finishes this duty. The precentor generally is presented by the monastery with some special gift (Pūjā). In addition there are some who, sitting alone, facing the shrine (Gandhakuṭi), praise the Buddha in their heart. There are others who, going to the temple, (in a small party) kneel side by side with their bodies upright, and, putting their hands on the ground, touch it with their heads, and thus perform the Threefold Salutation. These are the ceremonies of worship adopted in the West (i.e. in India). Old and infirm priests are allowed to use small mats whilst worshipping. Though, (in China), the hymns in praise of the Buddha have long existed, yet the manner of using them for a practical purpose is somewhat different from that adopted in India (lit. ‘Brahma-rāṣṭra’). The words which begin with ‘Praise be to the signs of the Buddha,’ and are used when worshipping the Buddha (in China) should be intoned in a long monotonous note, and the rule is to proceed thus for ten or twenty ślokas at one time. Further, Gāthas such as the one beginning with, ‘O Tathāgata!’ are really hymns in praise of the Buddha.”¹¹⁰

Water Clocks : Time-keeping

The whole of the daily routine of the vihāra was regulated by the regular announcement of the hours of the day, by means of

109. *Rel. Em.* p. 91.

110. *Record*, pp. 154-56.

a *ghaṇṭā* and the system of measuring time by means of water-clocks is described in considerable detail by I-tsing more than once. Thus in the *Record* he says :

"Besides, clepsydrae are much used in great monasteries in India. These together with some boys who watch them are gifts from kings of many generations, for the purpose of announcing hours to the monastics. Water is filled in a copper vessel, in which a copper bowl floats. This bowl is thin and delicate, and holds two Shang (prasthas) of water (about two pints). In its bottom a hole is pierced as small as a pin-hole, through which the water springs up ; this hole is to be made larger or smaller according to the time of the year. This must be well set, measuring (the length of) hours.

"Commencing from the morning, at the first immersion of the bowl, one stroke of a drum is announced, and at the second immersion, two strokes ; at the third immersion, three strokes. But, at the fourth immersion besides four strokes of a drum, two blasts of a conch-shell and one more beat of a drum are added. This is called the first hour, that is when the sun is at the east (between the zenith and the horizon). When the second turn of four immersions of the bowl is done, four strokes (of a drum) are sounded as before, and a conch-shell is also blown, which is followed by two more strokes (of a drum). This is called the second hour, that is the exact (beginning of the) horse-hour (i.e. noon). If the last two strokes are already sounded, priests do not eat, and if any one is found eating, he is to be expelled according to the monastic rites. There are also two hours in the afternoon which are announced in the same way as in the forenoon. There are four hours at night which are similar to those of day. Thus division of one day and one night together makes eight hours. When the first hour at night ends, the sub-director (Karmadāna) announces it to all, by striking the drum in a loft of the monastery. This is the regulation of the clepsydra in the Nālandā monastery. At sunset and at dawn, a drum is beaten ('one round') at the outside of the gate. These unimportant affairs are done by the servants ('pure men') and porters. After sunset till dawn, the priests never have the service of striking the Ghaṇṭā, nor is it the business of those servants ('pure men') but of the Karmadāna. There is a difference of four and five (strokes of the Ghaṇṭā), which is fully mentioned elsewhere."¹¹¹

111. *Record*, pp. 144-5.

And more briefly elsewhere¹¹² he writes :

"In the region of the five Indias, there are only great temples; the sovereigns have all directed the establishment therein of water-clocks; thanks to this instrument, when the different periods of day or night arrive, it is not difficult to comply with what discipline enjoins. The night divides itself into three parts; during the first and the last, the rules ordain giving oneself up to contemplation (*dhyāna*) while singing psalms; in the intervening part they do what they like. The explanation of the system of the water-clock conforms to what is expounded in the *Ki-koei-tchoan*."¹¹³

Bathing

One of the uses of the *ghaṇṭā* was to announce the bathing hour to the monks, and what I-tsing says of the manner of their bathing is as follows :¹¹⁴

"There are more than ten great pools near the Nālandā monastery, and there every morning a *ghaṇṭā* is sounded to remind the priests of the bathing-hour. Every one brings a bathing-sheet with him. Sometimes a hundred, sometimes a thousand (priests) leave the monastery together, and proceed in all directions towards these pools, where all of them take a bath."

Foreign Visitors

Of the numberless pilgrims and students that visited Nālandā besides the two best known, I-tsing has preserved some names of his contemporaries, and it may not be without interest to reproduce them here with the main facts relating to them as recorded by him :

1. Sramaṇa Hiuen-tchao (*Prakāśamati*)—spent 3 years at Nālandā (c. A.D. 660) studying under Jinaprabha the *Madhyamaka śāstra* and the *Śata-śāstra*.¹¹⁵ Then under Ratnasimha he learned the 17 points of yoga. Met by I-tsing at Nālandā¹¹⁶ where he came again after much travelling in India. He died in Mid-India when he was sixty odd years.

112. *Rel. Em.*, p. 92.

113. The *Ki-koei-tchoan* is no other than the *Record*.

114. *Record*, pp. 108-9. See Cunningham's plan for the pools near Nālandā.

115. *Rel. Em.* pp. 17-18.

116. *Ib.*, pp. 25-26.

2. Tao-hi (Śrīdeva). Dwelt some years in Nālandā studying Mahāyāna. He engraved a tablet in Chinese at Mahābodhi, and wrote (copied?) more than 400 chapters while at Nālandā. Died in India aged over 50.¹¹⁷

3. Ngo-li-yé-po-mouo (Āryavarman), native of Korea. Studied śāstras of discipline and copied sūtras in Nālandā where he died aged 70.¹¹⁸

4. Hoei-yi, of Korea (c. A.D. 638). Lived long in Nālandā for listening to the 'explications' there. I-tsing heard of his death there from the monks of Nālandā. The Sanskrit works he had written (copied?) were all in Nālandā.¹¹⁹

5. Fo-t'ouo-ta-mouo (Buddhadharma) of Tokharestan. I-tsing met him at Nālandā.¹²⁰

6. Tao-cheng (Candradeva), A.D. 649. Studied in Nālandā and was held in great esteem by the prince royal.¹²¹

7. Ta-ch'eng-teng (Mahāyāna Pradīpa). Spent some time in Dvāravatī and Ceylon. Travelled in South India and lived for twelve years in Tāmralipti learning Sanskrit before he arrived at Nālandā with I-tsing. Died at Kuśinagara in the Parinirvāṇa temple, aged over sixty.¹²²

8. Tao-lin (Śīlaprabha). He reached Nālandā by the sea-route and examined the Sūtras and the Śāstras of the Mahāyāna and the Kośas and spent many years there.¹²³ He travelled in Southern and Western India.

9. I-tsing himself. Also read Mahāyāna at Nālandā.¹²⁴ Stayed a year and studied śabda-vidyā-śāstra.¹²⁵ Returned and worshipped the Mūla-gandha koṭi; climbed up the Ḡḍhrakūṭa.¹²⁶ Lived ten years at Nālandā and studied the lives of the Saints.¹²⁷ Took with him Sanskrit texts comprising more than 500,000 stanzas.

10. Ling-yun (Prajñādeva). Painted at Nālandā the Maitreya and the Bodhidruma.¹²⁸

11. Tche-hong, nephew of Wang Hiu-en-tsé, the Chinese ambassador. In Nālandā he perused and surveyed the texts of the Mahāyāna.¹²⁹

117. *Ib.*, pp. 29-30.

118. *Ib.*, pp. 32-33.

119. *Ib.*, p. 34.

120. *Ib.*, p. 38.

121. *Ib.*, p. 39.

122. *Ib.*, pp. 71-73.

123. *Ib.*, p. 101.

124. *Ib.*, p. 104.

125. *Ib.*, pp. 121-2.

126. *Ib.*, p. 123.

127. *Ib.*, p. 125.

128. *Ib.*, pp. 126-27.

129. *Ib.* no. 133, 136-7

12. Ou-hing (Prajñādeva) (another). Listened to yoga in Nālandā; studied the Kośas and rules of discipline and practised the central contemplation (vipaśyana).¹³⁰ Companion of I-tsing. Died in India.

Besides the dozen names of his time (including his own) thus recorded by I-tsing, there are a few more names of Chinese visitors that may be noted. Ou-Kong, a Chinese monk spent three years at Nālandā (c. A.D. 765-8), and his memoirs, though not as interesting as those of Hiuen Tsang or even Fa-hien, still form a valuable supplement to them.¹³¹ Ki-ye, who travelled in India c. 970 A.D. and has left a compendious description of the state of Buddhism in India in his time, visited Nālandā among other monasteries and noted that all of them had entrances facing West.¹³² During the years A.D. 984-87. T'se-hoan, a monk of the division of Wei, seems to have visited Nālandā, though there is some uncertainty about this, due to the confusion introduced in the names in the text by its Song redactor.¹³³

Influence of Nālandā Abroad

Many doubtless went out from Nālandā to different countries, and particularly to China to assist in the great work of translation of Scriptures from Sanskrit that went on for several generations there. Some of them are mentioned elsewhere in this paper; but our knowledge of them is bound to be relatively meagre.¹³⁴

We have, with the aid of the Chinese pilgrims and the results of archaeological research, tried to gain some idea of what Nālandā was like in the heyday of its splendour, how it grew to be what it became; we have seen that wanton destruction by a ruthless invader extinguished its great light for ever. There are many gaps in our knowledge, some of which one hopes may yet be filled by the further progress of research. Of all the centres of learning in Ancient and Mediaeval India, and these were many scattered all over the land, we have most data about Nālandā, which was the greatest of such centres, not only for the study and spread of Bud-

130. *Ib.*, p. 145.

131. JA : 1895, Sep.-Oct. p. 358.

132. BEFEO, ii, p. 259.

133. Chavannes : *Les Inscriptions Chinoises de Bodh Gayā*, App. xiv.

134. See Nos. 7, 16, 51 of Appendix I, and 154 and 159 of Appendix II of Nanjio, *Catalogue*, Also *Journal of the Madras University*, xii, pp. 187-92.

dhism in its various phases, but for the pursuit of all Indian religious and philosophical systems. The history of the University of Nālandā practically spans a whole millennium, a period of wonderful and sustained endeavour and achievement in the realm of the spirit.

Buddhism in Nālandā

But when all is said, Nālandā is important more as a centre of Buddhism and for the tremendous influence it exerted on the thought and religion of the Eastern countries than for anything else. It is therefore necessary before we close this study to seek to determine with some precision the role of Nālandā in the evolution of Buddhist thought and practice in the four or five centuries during which it held the position of the most renowned world-centre of Buddhism. For Tibet during the middle ages Nālandā was enveloped in a mysterious haze of holiness; it was the source of all knowledge. Tāranāth traces all that is good in Mahāyāna in his estimation, its famous teachers, sacred texts and doctrines, its most celebrated reformers, all to Nālandā without any hesitation. This seems to be borne out also by the data furnished by Hiuen Tsang who says that all the bhikṣus studied the Mahāyāna at Nālandā, and counts Dharmapāla, the pupil of Dignāga and famous divine of the Yogācārya school of Asaṅga, and his own teacher Śīlabhadra from whom he heard an exposition of the Yogācārabhūmiśāstra, among the holders of the highest place in Nālandā. Again, of the texts collected by him and translated under his supervision, the bulk must have been doubtless obtained at Nālandā; and among them we find only seventeen titles belonging to the Hīnayāna while not less than fifty-eight books are Mahāyānist texts, some of which fall to be classed among Tantric texts like *Vajrapracchedika Prajñāpāramitā*—the chief scripture of mantra-Buddhistic Shin-gon-shu in Japan, the *Amoghapāśaḥṛdaya*, and so on.¹³⁵

Mahāyāna and Hīnayāna

I-tsing, however, who belonged himself to the Hīnayāna school of Mūlasarvāstivādins, makes the categorical statement: "In Northern India and the islands of the Southern Sea, they generally belong to the Hīnayāna,"¹³⁶ and Takakusu in his summary of I-tsing's introduction has noted that according to him the Ārya-mūlasarvāsti-

135. Bosch, p. 537 and Nanjio, *Catalogue*, p. 435.

136. *Record* p. 14.

vāda-nikāya was most flourishing in Magadha i.e. the region of Nālandā.¹³⁷ And we have seen above that I-tsing devotes particular attention to the rules of discipline prevailing in the Nālandā Vihāra, and there is no reason for us to think that the ten years he spent at Nālandā were anything but a very pleasant period of his life spent among most acceptable spiritual companions who had the same outlook as himself in matters of religion.

I-tsing surely knew what he was speaking about and made no mistake; and it is unlikely that in the short interval between Hiuen Tsang's departure and the arrival of I-tsing there was any wholesale change over from Mahāyāna to Hīnayāna; in fact, the whole trend in Buddhist history is the other way about. The truth of the matter is that it is wrong to postulate any sharp difference between the two main yānas of early Buddhism which were closely bound together by many subtle bonds from the beginning;¹³⁸ and apparently it was quite possible for the same set of facts to be described in such different words as Hiuen Tsang and I-tsing adopt about Nālandā, each naturally selecting and stressing the features that struck him as the most significant. Krom has pointed out admirably how, with the development of the eclectic and idealist philosophy of the Yogācāra school under the leadership of Asaṅga, even such distinction as was once recognised between Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna steadily lost its significance. He says:¹³⁹ "The masters of the Yogācārya had already given the example; not following *one* system but drawn from all creeds, was the doctrine expounded by Asaṅga, so that the śrāvakas (Hīnayānistic monks) became believers, and it is expressly related of Vasubandhu that he had studied the śāstras of the eighteen sects, the points of difference between sūtras and vinaya of the various schools and even the chief works of the Tīrthyas. We have already seen above, that according to I-tsing the same sect belonged in one place to the Hīnayāna and in another to the Mahāyāna, while the same author further mentions as the only systems of the Mahāyāna the two great schools of philosophy, Mādhyamika and Yogācārya. It is thus clearly proved how much the distinctions between the sects had been pushed aside by the schools of philosophy in the Church. The particular tenets of the sects lost their meaning except in so far as they found a place as fundamental principles in one of the systems of philosophy."

137. *Ib.* p. xxiv.

138. JA 11:8 (1916) p. 28 cited by Krom and Bosch.

139. *Barabūdur* ii, pp. 327-8.

We have seen already that Hiuen Tsang's own studies were not confined to Yogācārya texts but included some Hīnayāna texts, and even Brahminical śāstras. We can well understand, as Bosch has observed,¹⁴⁰ that in the midst of men who did not despise the study of Hīnayānist texts though they professed Mahāyāna as their creed, I-tsing might have felt quite at home, and when he recorded his impression that the Sarvāstivādins counted the largest number of followers in Magadha, he might have had in mind considerable numbers of sects which nominally belonged to the Hīnayāna but studied Asaṅga's system quite as much as the declared Mahāyānists. I-tsing himself was far from being a narrow Hīnayānist, and among the books he took with him from India to China, nearly one half were Mahāyāna texts, and some were definitely Tantric in character and included a number of Dhāraṇīs.¹⁴¹

Tantrayāna

In fact, a new Tantrayāna was growing out of the Yogācārya system at this period in Nālandā, and this new development did not take place without opposition. Discussing this very problem of the relation of the Tantrayāna to Yogācārya system in the Buddhism of Barabudur, Krom has rightly observed:¹⁴² "The evolution of religion and philosophy does not take place in such a way that at some given moment we can draw a line at the point where an old opinion is unanimously dropped and a new one taken up. The one glides unperceived into the other and gradually the believer's mind becomes ripe for new ideas, accepted first by a few, then by more and finally by the majority." We have many indications besides those already noted that Buddhism in Nālandā was passing through this type of transition in the seventh and eighth centuries A.D.¹⁴³ We have a curious and significant incident narrated by the biographer

140. p. 540.

141. *Rel. Em.*, pp. 194-6.

142. ii. p. 331.

143. P. Mus (BEFEO xxxii p. 328 and n. 1) citing A. K. Coomaraswami expresses the opinion that Nālandā's role in the history of Buddhist thought and practice was not so great as Bosch and Stutterheim would make it, and that Nālandā only relayed the developments that took place in Kashmir and transmitted them to the countries of the Far East. I am unable to share this belief in the face of the volume of evidence relating to Nālandā, and the relative paucity of our knowledge regarding Kashmir Buddhism. Vīradēva went from Peshawar to Nālandā to attain the crown of his career. See *Ante* p. 166.

of Hiuen Tsang which deserves attention here:¹⁴⁴ "Silāditya-rāja had constructed a Vihāra covered with brass plates by the side of the Nālandā monastery, about a hundred feet in height. It was renowned through all countries.

'Sky-flower' Doctrine

"The king after returning from the subjugation of Konyodha (Ganjam?) came to Orissa. The priests of this country all study the Little Vehicle, and do not believe in the Great Vehicle. They say it is a system of the "sky-flower" heretics, and was not delivered by Buddha.

"When they saw the king after his arrival, they entered into conversation and said: 'We hear that the king has built by the side of the Nālandā convent a Vihāra of brass, a work magnificent and admirable. But why did not your majesty construct a Kāpālika temple, or some other building of that sort'?

'The king answered: 'What mean you by these words of reproach?'

In reply they said: 'The Monastery of Nālandā and its 'sky flower'¹⁴⁵ doctrine is not different from the Kāpālika sect: this is our meaning." We seem to have a clear indication here that Mahāyāna at Nālandā was moving in the direction of Tantrayāna, not unmixed with Śaivism.

Tibet: Origin of Lamaism

Tāranātha attributes to Nālandā, as we have seen, the greatest influence on the growth and spread of Buddhism in many lands. In the first half of the eighth century Śānta-rakṣita, Padmasambhava, and Kamala-śīla, famous teachers of Nālandā, the two latter being teachers of Tantras, were invited to Tibet by king Kri-sring-deutsan (A.D. 728-786): they are said to have succeeded in founding the Lamaist church there and thus displaced the older state religion.¹⁴⁶ This Tibetan tradition is a further unmistakable proof of the Tantric direction taken by Buddhism at Nālandā after the seventh

144. pp. 158-59.

145. The *sky-flower* doctrine is fully explained in the Surāṅgama Sūtra. It was evidently a doctrine developed in the Nālandā monastery, as this Sūtra was framed there. The doctrine is simply that all objective phenomena are only, like *sky-flowers*, unreal and vanishing—Beal.

146. Vidyabhusan, *Indian Logic*, pp. 323 and 327; Bosch p. 543. Sankalia, pp. 117-20.

century. We must also note the remarkable expressions in the Nālandā copper-plate of Devapāladeva by which all the ārya bhikṣus are held to be a group of Tāntrika-bodhisattvas: *tāntrika-bodhisattvagaṇasya...caturddīśāryabhikṣusaṅghasya*. "From this it is clear," says Bosch, "not only that the bhikṣus had become Tantrists, but Mahāyānist Bodhisattvas, once held in great honour, had served their purpose, and a new generation of Tantric deities had been elevated to the throne."¹⁴⁷ The same writer draws attention to the evidence from the Chinese translations of Buddhist texts pointing in the same direction, and confirming the conclusions indicated so far. In the seventh century Hīnayāna texts still formed a considerable part of the books brought by pilgrims from Nālandā to China; but all the texts translated in the eighth century by Śubhakarasiṃha (716-35 A.D.), a śramaṇa who went to China from the Nālandā monastery,¹⁴⁸ were Mahāyānist texts; finally, in the tenth century, of the 118 books translated by Dharmadeva *alias* Fa-hien (973-1001), also an arrival from Nālandā in China, about a hundred were productions of the Tantrayāna.¹⁴⁹

Kāla-cakra-yāna

There was one more step taken by Nālandā Buddhism before its final disappearance. This seems to have occurred towards the end of the tenth century when Kāla-cakra Buddhism was received into Nālandā. This creed of mysterious origin was suffused with Vaiṣṇavism, and the story of its introduction into Nālandā is described in a Tibetan work of the sixteenth century. In the rendering of Cṣoma de Koros, the story reads as follows:¹⁵⁰ "He (a certain pandit called Tsilu or Chilu) then came to Nālandā in Central India, (S. Madhya). Having designed over the door of the Bihar the ten guardians (of the world), he wrote below them thus:

'He that does not know the chief first Buddha, (*Ādi-Buddha*), knows not the *circle of time* (*Kāla-Chakra*).

'He, that does not know the circle of time, knows not the exact enumeration of the divine attributes.

'He, that does not know the exact enumeration of the divine attributes, knows not the supreme intelligence (S. *Vajra dhara jñāna*).

147. pp. 543-4.

148. Nanjio *Catalogue*, p. 444.

149. *Ib.*, p. 450.

150. JASB ii (1833) pp. 57-8.

‘He, that does not know the supreme intelligence, knows not the Tantrika principles (*Tantra Yānam*).

‘He that does not know the Tantrika principles, and all such, are wanderers in the orb of transmigrations, and are out of the way (or path) of the supreme triumphator (S. *Bhagavān Vajra dhara*).

‘Therefore, *Ādi-Buddha* must be taught by every true b-Lama (S. *Guru*, a superior teacher, religious guide), and every true disciple who aspires to liberation (or emancipation) must hear them.’ Thus wrote he :

“The venerable (the Lord) Narotapa (Narottama?) being at that time the principal (S. *Upādhyāya*) of the *Bihar*; he together with five hundred pandits, disputed with him, but when they saw that he excelled them all in disputing, they fell down at his feet, and heard of him *Ādi-Buddha*; then this doctrine was much propagated.”

Thus Nālandā accepted a creed which had nothing in common with Buddhism of old except the name. This change over to forms of belief and practice which differed little from the surrounding Śaivism and Vaiṣṇavism of the land, and these in some of their most degenerate forms, must have contributed not a little to the weakening of the distinct position that belonged to Buddhism before this change. Henceforth Buddhism loses its identity and mingles with the incoherent mass of popular beliefs and superstitions characteristic of the vulgar side of Hinduism.

Influence in the Islands

The chief stages in the transformation of Buddhism at Nālandā were reflected in ‘the kingdoms of the Southern Seas’ as the Chinese called them, which, as we have seen, maintained a constant intercourse with Nālandā. In the splendid article on the Nālandā copper-plate of Devapāla, to which we have referred so frequently before, Bosch has gone into this question at some length, and we could do no better than present his main conclusions in his own words:¹⁵¹ “putting side by side the important moments in the History of the monastery of Nālandā and those in the history of Buddhism in the Archipelago, we see that the path followed by religion at Śrīvijaya, and later in Java, runs parallel with the line of development that Buddhism takes at Nālandā.Buddhism enters

151. Pp. 553-5 (Translated from the Dutch original).

Śrī Vijaya after the rise of the great monastery. The period of the finest bloom of Nālandā (seventh century) is also the time when the University of Palembang attains great lustre. The gradual changes of opinion regarding the true doctrine, starting from the Hīnayāna and proceeding along the Mahāyānist Yogācārya to a further stage of Tantrism already highly coloured by Śaivism, and ending in a fully degenerate Bhairava-cult, these shiftings we see repeated at Śrī Vijaya, and later in Java, in the same order and with the same tempo.¹⁵² Only on one point is there a difference to be noted; while the role of Nālandā is irrevocably played out after the end of the twelfth century, Buddhism in Java has still before it some centuries of comparative prosperity."

In one respect perhaps these observations of Bosch, made in 1925, need a slight amendment in the light of more recent researches; the large stone Buddha of Bukit Seguntang in Palembang raises a strong presumption that the introduction of Buddhism there must have occurred much earlier than Bosch suggests, and most probably from the region of the Kṛṣṇā delta. But the later influence of Nālandā on the Archipelago is undeniable, and Bosch's estimate of it may well be accepted as substantially correct.

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152. I have gone into this question in some detail in a forthcoming paper on Śrī Vijaya.

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Fig. 2.—Bronze image of Buddha
(ASI 1917-18, Pl. XIV-a).



Fig. 3.—Bronze Yamāntaka (p. 169) (ASI. CC. 1:20-21, Pl. 1).



Fig. 4.—Excavations—General View.

—Photo by Dr. S. Paramasivan

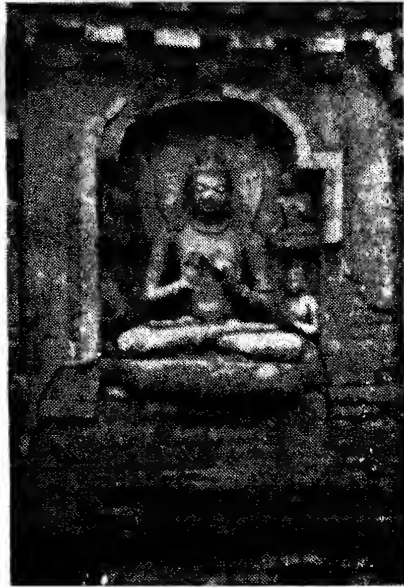


Fig. 5.—An early stucco figure
(p. 171)

—Photo by Dr. S. Paramasivan



Fig. 6.—Avalokiteśvara—p. 171
(ABIA 1934, Pl. II-a)



Fig. 7.—Inscribed stone Buddha in Dharmacakra mudrā—JRAS 1909 p. 441. (ASI. CC. No. 4309)

